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ABSTRACT

Operating on the premise that teachers who continue to learn make more effective instructors, this book describes several strategies and approaches for continued teacher development. Activities such as coaching or advising each other, attending institutes, learning and putting into practice new teaching techniques or strategies, or conducting research projects are described. The book also details the conditions necessary for the approach to be successful and lists the benefits to students, teachers, and schools. Issues, concerns, and possible pitfalls are raised. Characteristics of good staff development programs are defined, followed by recommendations concerning ways to establish and improve these programs. Several case studies and evaluation methods are presented. (CB)

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Continuing to Learn

A Guidebook for Teacher Development

The Regional Laboratory
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Continuing to Learn

A Guidebook for Teacher Development

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Foreward

For those of us who believe that when education is really good, something special happens between teacher and student, teachers are of prime importance. What, then, can be of greater concern than the continual growth and development of these key players in our education systems? It is our hope that this book contributes in some way to making such growth and development a reality.

There are many who are pessimistic about our abilities to make a real difference in the lives of teachers through professional development programs. They cite the constraints of tight budgets and the current structure of schools as insurmountable barriers to finding the time and commitment necessary. Yet in our search for research and good practice related to these kinds of problems, we discovered an abundance of evidence that not only can and does good staff development occur under "adverse" conditions, but it can, in fact, contribute to the alleviation of those conditions. Teachers who are supported through a variety of helpful, challenging development opportunities become partners in improving their schools and their districts. They apply their creative instincts to solving problems beyond those of their classrooms, and they contribute to alternative images of communities where adults and young people learn together continuously. Opportunities breed opportunities.

It is with this vision of learning communities that we maintain our optimism about the role and contribution of teacher development programs to the improvement of our schools and classrooms. This book attempts to bring that vision to life through its presentation of learnings, strategies, stories, and a wealth of resources that school people can draw on to create or improve their professional development programs for teachers. Our future plans call for the identification and development of additional resources to assist those who are encouraged and energized by its contents and want to apply what they read. It is our hope that the book and these additions will serve as a catalyst for collaborative work in planning for more effective staff development programs throughout the region and, with our copublisher, the National Staff Development Council, throughout the nation.

David P. Crandall, Ed.D.
Executive Director
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Acknowledgments

This book has much in common with good teacher development programs. Based on research and sound practice, varied in style and format, matched to what we've learned are the needs of our audience—it is above all a product of collaboration and collegiality. Like all collaborative efforts, this one had its ups and downs. Too many meetings. Too much time. Continual rehashing of goals and procedures. Accommodating conflicting viewpoints. Acclimating new members of the writing team and missing the contributions of old members. Worrying about producing something that would read like it was "designed by a committee."

Despite all of these quite normal, yet bothersome, drawbacks of collaborative work, we all felt the strength and support of each other's commitment to making this book one we could be proud of. Pooling the knowledge and experience of six individuals with backgrounds in school change, training, organization development, teaching, collaboration, and staff development allowed us each to learn much that we didn't know, and learn how we could best complement each other. We believe that, as a result, the whole (of the book) is equal to more than the sum of its parts.

Like others who believe in collaboration, we often reached out to others for help in improving the spirit and the content of this book. Our colleagues at The Regional Laboratory searched out exemplary staff development programs to add to our information base, provided us with reviewers and insights, and suspended disbelief when we reported month after month that the book was indeed approaching completion. Staff developers contributed descriptions of their programs and reminded us of the rich resources we have within our diverse region.

At the point when the book had enough pieces to vaguely resemble what we had in mind, we took the risk of sharing a field review version with a

number of people whose opinions about its content, tone, and usefulness were critical to its completion. We greatly appreciate the careful reviews of the following teachers, administrators, national experts, state agency staff, association leaders, university faculty, and those who fit, as we do, into the "other" category: Ann Clark, Myrna Cooper, Jeanie Crosby, Bill Dandridge, Kathleen Edwards, Margaretta Edwards, Susan Ellis, Tom Fitzgerald, Pat Forgione, Bill Glass and his staff development associates in Bridgeport, Donna Jacobs, Cynthia Jorgensen, Marcia Kenefick, Sarah Levine, Ann Lieberman, Judy McAllister, Dorothy McGowan, Nini McManamy, Masha Rudman, Carole Sedita, Georgea Sparks, Andrea Stein, Maida Townsend, and Darlene Worth.

Our thanks, too, to a committed, patient, production team that made our words fit to print and then got them into print—Pat Bales, Ruth Baxter, Carrie Callahan, Eileen Hanawalt, Jan Johnson, and Clif Lund-Rollins—and especially to Janet Angelis, Production Manager Supreme, who painstakingly transformed a typed manuscript into the book we had hoped for.

This book represents for us a beginning rather than an end, since we know that print documents rarely if ever change practice. But we are hopeful that with enthusiastic staff developers from our region and members of the National Staff Development Council from around the country, we can use the book as a catalyst as we work together to create and improve professional development opportunities for teachers.

SL-H, CH, MA, LM, CD, MW

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1

Introduction

Teachers and the quality of their teaching are much in the news today and promise to stay there in the near future. In May 1986 the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy concluded that between 1986 and 1992 1.3 million new teachers will join the teaching force. Many of these new teachers will replace current teachers who leave our schools at the rate of 40% each year. But why are so many teachers leaving the profession? While it's clear that low pay is a factor, one felt even more keenly by many teachers is the absence of a professional work environment. They sense that staying in the profession means standing still rather than experiencing growth and renewal.

Thus, supporting the continual development of teachers is critical to attracting and keeping the best and the brightest people in the profession. A person who has opportunities to learn and to grow can best provide such opportunities for our young people. Schools that are true learning communities for adults and children alike are the only kind that hold promise for the future.

But how to build such learning communities? We believe that a strong teacher development program is a good and necessary start. Schools need to transform what has heretofore been called 'inservice' and interpreted by many as something done *to* teachers into opportunities for teachers to engage in a wide range of growth experiences that have real meaning to them. Fortunately, we are not alone in that belief. Of course we are joined by teachers—but, of equal importance, increasingly more "authorities" are taking action to make teacher development programs a reality. State departments of education, school boards, and district offices are providing the impetus (commonly in the form of mandates) and often (but unfortunately, not always, and rarely enough) the support and resources to initiate significant teacher development programs.

School people decry mandates, and rightly so, since they so often ignore the reality of schools and classrooms. But in the case of recent mandates to establish staff development teams or school improvement initiatives, teachers and others see an opportunity that provides the legitimacy to work on an often-neglected and sorely needed area: the professional development of teachers.

Whether interest in teacher development springs from such an "opportunity" or a desire to start up or improve an existing program, the field of teacher development offers many challenges. These include: how to make sure the needs of teachers, schools, and districts are meshed and met; how to refine and expand skills while building the feeling of empowerment; how to find the time; how to organize, plan, and get resources; how to decide what to do and when; and how to make sure the program is the best it can be.

Where does one begin responding to these challenges? There are many places to go for help, but our experience tells us that there is no readily accessible primer—a written document that lays out the options, points to the resources, and suggests a roadmap based on research and proven practice. We hope that we have created such a primer. In this book we have pulled together answers to many of the questions we've heard schools and districts ask:

- What are characteristics of really good staff development programs, and how can we tell if ours has them?
- What are some considerations we should keep in mind as we develop or strengthen our program?
- What are peer coaching, action research, and individually guided professional development, and why should we choose one over the other?
- How can structures such as teacher centers, partnerships, and institutes provide ongoing support for our program?
- Where can we go to find out more about staff development practices, structures, procedures, programs, and research?

Our purpose in this guidebook is to provide an overview of staff development practices and processes for those with an action orientation. We go light on theory and research—although our writing is based on both—and heavy on practice. Our desire is to help people expand their vision of what professional development can be by realizing the many alternatives from which they may choose. Thus fueled, they can better choose among the alternatives and incorporate the elements of successful programs into their own.

We wrote this book for people in schools and districts who have some responsibility for staff development: teachers on staff development or school improvement teams, principals, inservice coordinators, supervisors, assistant superintendents. We also address the book to those who work with schools, whether from their base in state agencies, universities, or private educational service organizations. Our hope is that school people, working with those external to but supportive of their efforts, can take advantage of what has been found to work.

Some Definitions

Throughout the book we use the words *teacher development, professional development, staff development,* and *school improvement.* Before continuing, we need to clarify what the words mean to us.

The focus of this book is on the *professional development* of teachers: engaging them in a wide variety of opportunities for growth in knowledge and skills within the education profession. We use the term *staff development* interchangeably with professional development, even though we know there are some who use a much narrower definition.[*] While the information in this book draws widely from the field of professional development, our examples and scenarios are limited to the development of **teachers.** Although we know that much of the book's contents generalize to the development of other education professionals, we have chosen to take an in-depth look at this one important role group.

One final clarification: how teacher development and school improvement mesh. We use *school improvement* to refer to those efforts that focus on long-term, positive change in schools. Such efforts may involve enhancing teachers' instructional strategies, strengthening leadership, updating curriculum, improving the physical facilities, or a combination of some or all of these. While these must be coordinated as part of a comprehensive plan, we view the development of teachers as only one component—but an important one, and one that we've chosen to give special attention. We know that schools and districts approach improvement from a number of angles, and that those engaged in school improvement efforts will at some point work on teacher development. Conversely, those conducting teacher development efforts will need to integrate them with other areas of school need—and by their efforts, they will contribute to the overall improvement of the school.

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[*] For example, the National Education Association defines staff development as "education mandated for practicing professionals" (NEA, 1985); our definition, like that of the National Staff Development Council, includes "individual, personal self-improvement efforts" (NSDC, 1986).

While we see the professional development of teachers as one component of school improvement, we also tend to think if it quite broadly. There are numerous reasons for engaging in professional development, and there are at least as many ways to do so. Teachers seek guidance through channels such as clinical supervision; they ask questions and solve problems through action research; they practice new techniques with 'microteaching' incidents in training workshops; they set new goals for personal growth as a result of reflective interviews with a coach or mentor; they learn how to grow with a group of colleagues or a whole district in systemwide approaches to staff development. As individual teachers or groups of teachers feel empowered and renewed, they can benefit from these professional development experiences.

Contents and Organization of the Book

The contents of this book can be described using the metaphor of food planning. One of the first things to know in planning what to eat is what is good nutrition. What makes a diet nutritious? Our next chapter answers the questions:

> What are the attributes of a successful staff development program? What makes a staff development program good?

To continue the metaphor, it is next important to know how to put nutritious food together. Meals shouldn't be all protein, nor should they be all carbohydrates, no matter how good each is for us. We need to balance our diet. Our third chapter answers these questions:

> What are the elements that need to be considered in developing or improving a staff development program? What are some steps in the process? How can a good program be put together?

We know there are endless choices when it comes to healthy food. We can get our protein through meat, eggs, or beans. We can make a tossed salad or a fruit salad. We can stir-fry, or we can make a stew. Our choices may be dictated by our pocketbook, by our taste buds, or by our convictions (e.g., we may be vegetarians). There are countless alternatives that will be both nutritious and balanced. Chapter 4 answers:

> What alternative strategies and structures exist that can round out or improve a staff development program? What outcomes do the different choices foster? What assumptions are they based on?

> What conditions are necessary for different ones to work? What resources are available to support the different choices?

Further, when we can create a gourmet repast or a picnic dinner, each requires different resources, ambience, tableware, etc. Professional development programs can likewise be significantly different one from another. The case study of Chapter 5 answers:

> What are images of different, yet successful, staff development programs? How have real people taken what is known about professional development and created a program that works for them?

Finally, we periodically need to stop and assess our health and the contribution that our diet is making to it. It may be important to adjust the balance of foods, or perhaps a particular ingredient, such as salt or sugar. In the final chapter of this book we answer:

> How are staff development programs best evaluated? What outcomes are reasonable and how can they be assessed? How can an evaluation be conducted that engages all participants, giving them an important stake in making meaningful changes in the program?

We see the book as a sourcebook for staff development planners, implementors, and evaluators. We have included many ideas, images, issues, and dilemmas to fuel dialogue and discussion; at the same time we have provided concrete examples, resources, and strategies to prompt action. And we've placed our references at the end of each chapter and subchapter to make it easy for readers to access the research on a particular topic or strategy.

Throughout our effort we have been impressed at how substantial a field teacher development is—how much is known from research and practice about what makes good programs. The challenge is to use this knowledge, breaking down the barriers to progress that at times appear insurmountable, and to do so as a community of educators with the single-minded goal of professional growth that makes schools better places for young people.

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2

Critical Attributes of Effective Teacher Development Programs

Teacher development is a complex process whose success depends upon both a favorable context for learning and practical, engaging activities. Availability of resources, flexible working conditions, support, and recognition can make all the difference in the desire of teachers to refine their practice. Similarly, staff development experiences that build on collegiality, collaboration, discovery, and solving real problems of teaching and learning summon the strength within a staff, instead of just challenging them to measure up to somebody else's standard. The focal point for staff development is the individual, working with others, trying to do the best possible job of educating children. When staff development emphasizes an idea or an approach without considering the person(s) who will implement it, the design and results are weakened.

Since staff development and school improvement efforts are personal experiences shaped by the players and circumstances involved, they belie tidy recipes for success. They are more than just training designs; they are the net result of planning, trial and error, assessing results, and sustaining commitment to improvements. Yet we can identify certain characteristics that underlie most, if not all, successful change efforts. These relate to both the climate for growth in a school and the activities pursued in the name of professional development. Figure 1 lists these characteristics, and the following elaboration shows how each plays out in staff development programs.

These attributes of successful staff development consider the learner(s), the challenge, the reward, and the difference a program or process can make. They are not ordered or tightly integrated as factors, but the absence of any one of them has the power to sink the ship. Together they support and sustain a community of learners.

In talking about staff development as a collective set of experiences involving both individuals and the context in which they work, the notion of collegiality and collaboration is a good place to start.

Collegiality and Collaboration

Pointing to the need for collaborative staff development in schools, Carl Glickman (1986) refers to the "one room school" syndrome. It's a tradition of isolationism created long ago when teachers literally worked alone in one room schools. While we have increased personnel, we have not always connected staff in schools for purposes of sharing expertise, solving problems, and pursuing improvement. Creating collegial or collaborative relationships is a vital strategy for supporting individual and organizational change.

Collegiality is more than congeniality; it means connecting on a professional level with other school staff, looking for new ideas, advice, a forum to test models of teaching (Little, 1982; Lortie, 1975). Collabora-

Figure 1

Characteristics of Successful Staff Development Programs

Collegiality and collaboration

Experimentation and risk taking

Incorporation of available knowledge bases

Appropriate participant involvement in goal setting, implementation, evaluation, and decision making

Time to work on staff development and assimilate new learnings

Leadership and sustained administrative support

Appropriate incentives and rewards

Designs built on principles of adult learning and the change process

Integration of individual goals with school and district goals

Formal placement of the program within the philosophy and organizational structure of the school and district tion relates to mutual problem solving, assuming that multiple perspectives are better than single ones. It can increase collective understanding, strengthen a sense of common mission, and buoy individuals who might otherwise be swamped by the demands of facing children alone in the classroom.

In a school where collegiality and collaboration are norms, the staff recognizes its resourcefulness. Teachers and administrators understand teaching to be a craft, actively learned on the job and eminently worth talking about. They build a common language about teaching, with the focus on practice rather than on teachers or students (Lieberman, 1986). In such settings, teachers as well as administrators are actively involved in planning as well as participating in staff development experiences. The principal models collegiality by engaging in activities rather than just sanctioning them. The collective enterprise of staff development removes the stigma from an individual's improvement activities. Everyone has something to learn, and everyone can benefit from another's experience.

Experimentation and Risk Taking

A recent article on professional growth notes that one of the major misconceptions about teaching, found both inside and outside the profession, is that teaching is a relatively commonplace, easy-to-learn task (Wildman & Niles, 1987). This attitude leads people to believe that teachers are either born mysteriously into the profession or hatched in teacher education programs. What this perspective ignores is the complexity of learning to teach real kids in imperfect environments.

Methods may be starting points, but they don't cover the tremendous range of classroom situations and responses from students. Teachers constantly adjust their techniques and goals as they work. The classroom is a living laboratory, requiring experimentation and risks, moving from comfortable frames of reference to breaking new ground.

The ability to take these risks necessary to teach well, and to find support in failure as well as in success, demands a trusting environment for learning. For teachers as well as for students, trying something new often means initially experiencing discomfort. It may mean getting worse before getting better. The perseverance needed to get beyond adequate performance to efficient, graceful form can be staggering. Teachers need to feel comfortable with their discomfort, knowing that they are supported in their growth.

Incorporation of Available Knowledge Bases

Saphier and King (1985) write:

> There are generic knowledge bases about teaching skills and how students learn; about teaching methods in particular areas; about young people's cognitive and affective development; and about each of the academic disciplines. These knowledge bases are practical, accessible, and very large. Teachers and supervisors are continually reaching out to them to improve their teaching and supervision (p. 2).

While most agree that there are indeed substantial knowledge bases from which teachers can draw, we have seen few indications that most teachers do, as Saphier and King claim. For whatever reasons—and there are many that are not the fault of teachers—what is known from research and sound practice is *not* fed continuously into classroom practice (Huberman, 1983). But it is an important element of strong professional development programs. While curiosity and eagerness to learn more effective ways of teaching characterize the openness in the teaching profession, good staff development takes advantage of this curiosity and promotes disciplined inquiry into important areas of teaching and learning.

Knowledge useful to teachers may be documented in research or validated in model programs and practices; both sources inform teaching. The strongest position sees teachers contributing to as well as using knowledge bases. If knowledge is something somebody else has and there's no bridging to or extending beyond it, then the learner remains removed and passive.

Research and model practices can stimulate reflection, discussion, and a desire to improve. They can provide guidance and direction for changing practice in ways that increase student learning. They should not, however, be used as a definition of how all teachers must behave in the classroom (Good & Weinstein, 1986) or as a cure-all for perceived deficiencies in the profession (Zumwalt, 1986). As Zumwalt says, "the potential of research to improve education does not come by generating rules of practice but rather from informing the deliberations of teachers and from encouraging similar inquiry from them (p. 2)."

Appropriate Participant Involvement in Goal Setting, Implementation, Evaluation, and Decision Making

Teachers are always involved in their own development, but the degree to which they are invested in their own and their system's improvement is often limited. Many times teachers are enrolled in workshops that supervisors deem necessary. They neither engage in the question of need nor the search for viable solutions. When the time comes to evaluate a training workshop, it is the content they are asked to evaluate; rarely are they given an opportunity to validate the appropriateness of the program given their knowledge, their experience, and their questions about student learning. Furthermore, they contribute little to the application of the practice in their classrooms—the tailoring that is so necessary if such practices are to foster improvements.

This is staff development in spite of the participants rather than for them. It also misses an opportunity to enlist teachers in the development of the school and district.

Good staff development recognizes the validity of the individual as well as the community to which that person belongs. It seeks to engage participants in as many decision points as possible. Yet it acknowledges that the teacher's major purpose is to teach students, not to serve on committees and respond to questionnaires and surveys seeking input and involvement in every decision being made. Thus effective professional development programs vary the kinds of involvement they seek from individual teachers, depending on the goals and the approaches taken.

Sometimes teachers share responsibility for planning, implementing, and evaluating staff development activities. Other times individuals assess their own needs, identify goals, arrange activities, evaluate their learning, and plan for another cycle of development. Still other times teachers participate in training arranged by a committee or a concerned administrator. While such training may be voluntary, there are also cases where participation is mandatory. In such case, success relies on the care with which the particular training was chosen (i.e., that it fits the improvement needs of teachers), the ability of the trainer or presenter to relate to the classroom realities of the participants and allow for reflection on the best applications, the soundness of the content being presented, and the amount of help and support available to teachers to implement the new practices.

Research and practice have shown that, even when teachers are not involved in decisions leading up to a training program, they can develop strong commitment to use of the new ideas when there are clear, observable benefits to their students (Crandall, 1983; Guskey, 1986). Here, teacher involvement in tailoring a new practice to their own situations gives them an opportunity to establish a relevance for themselves and the context in which they work.

Any time staff development opportunities ignore the importance of involvement by participants, one can expect only hit-or-miss results.

Time to Work on Staff Development and Assimilate New Learnings

Time is both a necessity and a limitation to teacher development. As we have said, learning to teach continues throughout a person's career and requires constant analysis, reflection, experimentation, and support from colleagues. Unfortunately, most school schedules and calendars do not leave time for individual or collective reflection. Without such time, schools cannot encourage investigation or disciplined inquiry into teaching. Neither do they reward those exemplary few who research, write, coach, or collaborate.

Good professional development programs support the necessity of reflective teaching, believing that teachers will be more professional if they keep striving to know their craft better. Doctors and lawyers are expected to stay current and learn new ways of approaching problems; likewise teachers should be supported in their expansion of knowledge and skill. If we want teachers to impart children with powers to think and evaluate information, we must sanction the same inquiry on their part.

If teachers are not engaged in learning, then the price we pay for their limited knowledge is higher than most people realize. It takes time to learn—time to watch, practice, commit to changes, and work them smoothly into one's routine. Time buys new organizational arrangements that can support teacher development, such as limiting the difficulty of teaching assignments for new teachers, reducing teaching loads of advising teachers, hiring more staff or teaming the staff available to cover the classes of teachers released from teaching, and allocating more time for staff development during the school year or beyond the current ten-month year. "Finding more time for teacher growth obviously involves increased costs, but time-efficient staff development efforts that do not produce teacher learning are clearly not cost-effective (Wildman & Niles, 1987, p. 2)."

Another issue related to time is the need for stability and continuity to be built into a staff development program. Constant introduction of new programs, change for the sake of change, instability in goals, staff, or funding—all of these are apt to create a climate in which new ideas come and go, nothing takes root, and teachers experience continual frustration. A good staff development program balances the infusion of the new with time to effectively implement approaches that have already been introduced.

Leadership and Sustained Administrative Support

Leadership and support from key school leaders, usually administrators, is critical to the success of staff development efforts (Loucks-Horsley & Hergert, 1985). Traditional leaders such as superintendents and principals have an important role in legitimizing and maintaining these efforts. They can choose to orchestrate and direct staff development themselves or delegate leadership to curriculum supervisors, department heads, team leaders, or staff development teams.

When administrators delegate operational functions of staff development to teams or supervisors, they still can support staff development by promoting the activities, focusing the work, helping with the selection of players, providing time and resources, and incorporating the results of staff development into teacher and school evaluation. Beyond these indirect support strategies, administrators can show they value staff development by participating in meetings and helping to select training activities. They can show moral support by verbal praise and encouragement, publication of teacher accomplishments, and bringing coffee and muffins to planning meetings.

It is important to note that new leaders emerge from improvement activities. Those who gain a new perspective on teaching can become vital players in the school improvement game. They may assume leadership roles in training others in new techniques or assisting a peer in adapting a strategy; or they may help a superintendent explain a program change to the community or school board. The roles of instructional leadership are not exclusive, and the more people in the education community who can take on leadership roles, the more likely their sense of commitment and responsibility will lead to real school improvement.

Appropriate Incentives and Rewards

People can be rewarded in many different ways. Good staff development systems pay attention to incentives and rewards; they have formal reward structures in place, with options and opportunities available so that an individual can decide what is rewarding. Extrinsic rewards such as pay increases or working in a nice facility count with teachers, but intrinsic rewards count more. Teachers are motivated by opportunities to meet new people, share ideas and work together, increase knowledge and competence, and take time to think, talk, and figure out alternative teaching strategies.

Mastery of a new skill is a strong reward as well as a motivator for continuing to use and refine a new approach. Doing something new well can greatly increase teachers' commitment to new approaches, whether or not they were committed when the new approach was first introduced (Crandall, 1983).

All of these rewards assume *recognition, respect,* and *reinforcement*—the three Rs of job satisfaction that are particularly important incentives for teachers (Jacullo-Noto, 1986). If problems such as inconvenient times and locations and forced participation are avoided, such extrinsic incentives as money, credit, or materials, while certainly appreciated, are not necessary for teacher involvement in and commitment to improvement activities. Professional growth is itself a reward. And probably the most powerful motivator is simply a sense of efficacy—a belief that what one does makes a difference (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978).

Designs Built on Principles of Adult Learning and the Change Process

Solid professional development programs take into account what is known about adult learning. They acknowledge that adults learn differently than children. Thus, an understanding of *andragogy,* the teaching of adults, is needed.

Studies of adult development (Krupp, 1981; Oja, 1980) and of how adults learn best indicate several conditions necessary for adult growth. These include

- opportunities to try out new practices;
- careful and continuous guided reflection and discussion about the proposed changes;
- continuity of programs and time for significant change; and
- personal support as well as challenge during this change process (Sprinthall & Sprinthall, 1983).

Training designs that reflect these conditions include the following:

- study of the theory or rationale for the desired teaching method or change;
- observation of demonstrations of the practice;
- discussion of application;
- practice and feedback; and
- coaching for application in the work setting (Joyce & Showers, 1982; Sparks, 1983).

If most staff development programs aim to change the behavior of teachers, as we believe they do, then attention to what is known about the change process can also make staff development more successful. A useful frame of reference is provided by the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), which describes how individuals develop in their feelings and skills as they are introduced to and implement something new. When staff developers know "where people are" in the change process, they can tailor their help and support to teachers' developmental levels (Hall & Loucks, 1978).

For example, when teachers (and others) engage in a new practice, their concerns about the practice change, as does their skill in using it. When first considering a change, the most dominant concerns are self-oriented—"What is it, and how will it affect me?" Later, concerns change to wanting to master the new practice, to getting coordinated and organized to use it comfortably. Finally, when the practice has been mastered, concerns are focused more on how it is affecting students and how it can be changed to have greater impact.

Good planners keep the notion of changing concerns in mind as they design staff development activities. They make sure teachers have the opportunity to resolve their concerns as they emerge, providing answers to the questions teachers are asking when they are most salient. For example, early in the process teachers are more likely to want to know what a new practice will look like in their classrooms and what the expectations of administrators are, rather than wanting focused training in how-to-do-it or in evaluating student outcomes. A common mistake of staff developers is to design activities related to *their* concerns, rather than the concerns of teachers, and their concerns are often quite different.

If change is a process, then another application of change process research is providing sufficient time, attention, and assistance for new ideas and skills to take hold. Hunter (1985) has aptly labelled as "creative floundering" the unstable period of trial and error during which participants in staff development are practicing, receiving feedback, adjusting, and practicing again. Getting through this period successfully requires considerable time. As Loucks-Horsley and Hergert (1985) observe, implementing and mastering any new practice requires more than a one or two day "hit and run" workshop and a cheerful, "God bless you." Learning and applying new concepts and skills do not occur overnight. One-time training sessions—regardless of the length—are rarely sufficient.

Staff development is most influential when it is conducted often enough and long enough to ensure progressive gains in knowledge, skill, and confidence (Little, 1986). If, as Crandall (1983) and Guskey (1986) claim, change in teacher attitudes and beliefs occurs *after* teachers have had a chance to practice strategies with their students and see the results, then follow-up after training is even more crucial than the training activity itself. Such support over time builds the commitment, shared understanding, and collegiality characteristic of successful staff development efforts.

Integration of Individual Goals with School and District Goals

A good staff development program is like an umbrella: it takes into account all that is under its protection. It considers the goals of individual teachers as well as those of the school and the district, and it works hard to integrate these into a whole.

Demands on schools and teachers come in many forms and from many places. Responding to these can be piecemeal or planned. In places where staff development works to support growth and development, the needs stimulated by these demands are incorporated into an overall plan. As with all professionals, when it comes to their own development, teachers have both privileges and responsibilities. They can choose ways of satisfying their growth needs, as well as participate in activities to further the improvement of their school and district. A good staff development program maximizes the extent to which these two are integrated and the extent to which teachers have influence over their integration.

Formal Placement of the Program Within the Philosophy and Organizational Structure of the School and District

Formal establishment of defined mechanisms that promote staff development, such as district-level inservice coordinating committees and school-based planning teams, protects collaborative planning and increases the likelihood that improvement activities will continue over time. In districts or schools that do not develop such structures, planning and management of improvement are dependent upon a few energetic individuals; they often cease altogether if those individuals move on to other things or districts. Different activities and strategies come and go, with no glue to hold them together and ensure continuity. Only if staff development is embedded in the philosophy and organizational structure of schools and districts can a culture of continuous growth thrive.

How this can happen, and how such a system can incorporate the other attributes of successful professional development programs, is discussed at length in the next chapter.

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3

Developing a Professional Development Program

We believe that to embody all the critical attributes we've described, staff developers must think *programmatically*—developing and then working within a formal structure or program dedicated to the ongoing professional development of teachers. Within that structure a variety of activities can occur. The development and maintenance of a professional environment for teachers cannot be left to chance or to administrative initiative alone. It is too important. A defined structure provides the framework for the creation and sustenance of conditions under which teachers can attend to practicing and improving their craft. It protects and nurtures both the right and expectation of continued professional development. It symbolizes and also puts into action a serious commitment to the growth of teachers.

What a Strong Professional Development Program Looks Like

A successful teacher development program is characterized by diversity of ideas, people, and support practices. The uniqueness of concerns, interests, and cultures within the school building and staff are acknowledged and valued. Common district goals, usually limited in number to those that truly affect all schools, are thoughtfully identified. Building staff work toward these goals, collectively and individually, often in unique ways that match the context of their schools and classrooms. Needs or issues peculiar to individual staff are also identified and addressed in each school.

A variety of professional development strategies to respond to needs at each level are then planned and carried out. An example of a diverse set of activities within a single program might be: a summer institute on alternative teaching strategies and peer coaching, with building-based follow-up throughout the year; a building-based teacher advising team; action research teams for content specialists; and a mentor program for new teachers. Rather than one route to improvement, numerous options are available. All are coordinated through the teacher development system.

Formal authorization of teacher development at the district and building level is an essential element of an effective program. School board policies that address the purposes and value of teacher development, as well as the resources directed to it, assure its continuation over time. Teacher development systems are formally embedded in the school organization through other means as well, such as written and approved management plans, clauses about professional growth expectations in teacher contracts, an approved budget, and allocation of time. If teacher development is embedded in the organization of the school or district, the support structure and ensuing climate of professional stimulation and growth endures, even though the focus of participants changes over time.

The issue of how to share control over teacher development between the district and the building is a hot one, and one that needs to be settled for each situation individually. Some have found that school-based improvement efforts have generally been more effective than districtwide attempts. Building teams, they argue, are closer to their staffs, able to assess their schools with greater accuracy, and more likely to resolve problems peculiar to their schools. However, district teams play an important coordination and support role in many districts. Sometimes schools are too small to even have a building-based team. The desire to coordinate activities, share limited resources, and to improve communication is a strong and valid argument for district-level coordination and, in some cases, direction.

A **mission statement** of goals and beliefs regarding teacher development is another important structural element. The beliefs become the foundation of the system and guide development efforts. This mission statement must be more than just an artifact; it should be thoughtfully developed by teachers, administrators, and significant others through a participatory process that results in broad endorsement. A few of the "assumptions about professional growth" that drive one high school program include

- Professional development is a process, not an event, for both teacher and principal.
- Diversity of ideas and practices—as learners and teachers—contributes to the strength of our school.
- Learning takes time and requires personal support as well as challenge.

A metaphor by Longfellow exemplifies the philosophy in another district: "As turning the logs will make a dull fire burn, so changes of study a dull brain. . . ."

A structure for teacher development with formal authority, a mission statement, and diverse improvement offerings can still be unresponsive and irrelevant if it is not collaborative in nature. This is best accomplished through the establishment of responsible groups within the school and district that are representative of the teachers and have real decision-making prerogatives. A **management plan** in which the roles and composition of these groups are clearly designated is a major component of a professional development program. Thoughtful delineation of the roles of different groups within the program helps to reduce confusion and conflict, avoid duplication of effort, and ensure equitable and appropriate distribution of tasks and rewards. The heightened awareness of who is responsible for what also greatly improves coordination of activities.

Rules for group operations and membership are also defined in the management plan. Attention to how a group works is particularly helpful with very diverse groups or groups that are not used to working together. A simple checklist for running good meetings can be an invaluable tool for disruptive groups or for those unaccustomed to working together. Modified Robert's Rules of Order and the checklist can bring order to a chaotic situation.

Attrition is a commonly cited reason for the dissolution of many staff development groups. Defined replacement procedures increase the likelihood of continuity.

The **scope** of a staff development program most typically encompasses a school district, but the program may also be school-based or regional. The same characteristics apply. A program may be simple or very complex, depending in large part on the size and differentiation of the school organization and how experienced participants are in collaborative professional development activities. As staff become more aware and skilled as professional development planners and consumers, a program usually becomes more differentiated and complex.

An example of a simple staff development system is the "Star Trek" model developed in a small rural district composed of three tiny elementary schools and one high school. Their structure consisted of a district team responsible for assessing district needs and planning districtwide staff development activities. An elementary and secondary team was responsible for conducting the assessment with their peers.

The responsible groups in one large and more complex staff development program included a district inservice committee, building teacher assistance teams, a district instructional theory-into-practice group, a principal assistance team, and teacher-as-researcher groups.

Although formalized, an effective staff development program is **flexible and modified regularly.** As the needs, players, and context of the involved schools change, the specific structure of the system may also need to be modified and should be examined regularly. As a support system matures, a more differentiated structure might be appropriate. Or the reverse might occur, as it did in an example we discuss at the end of this chapter.

An effective professional development program embodies all of the attributes of successful teacher development efforts described in Chapter 2. If a professional development system is embedded in the philosophy and organizational structure of the school and district, it provides a stable and enduring arena for activities to be played out. A successful system is a collaborative and collegial one, based on the assumption that schools and staff cannot improve without people working together. Sustained and visible support from key school leaders is required. Norms of continuous improvement and experimentation are consciously built into the professional development system over time. The system provides the support and stability for these norms to develop. Intrinsic as well as extrinsic rewards are identified and provide for involvement in a variety of professional growth activities. Training programs and other support activities, either driven or supported by research and sound practice, are designed carefully to model principles of adult learning. The activities provide sufficient time and appropriate support for desired knowledge and skills to be learned and transferred into the classroom.

Yet with all these attributes to be considered, designing a staff development program doesn't have to be a complicated, overwhelming task. As one deputy superintendent noted:

> It may sound sophisticated, but it's really very simple. Just forming a central council is not enough, but it's a good place to start. Goals and objectives don't have to be fancy. Start with a few goals for the system that are important, define how to do them, set aside some money for support, and go from there.

Putting a program into practice essentially means involving staff, designing the structure, and providing lots of assistance and support to carry out planning tasks and implement professional growth strategies. A number of important things should be kept in mind, however. These considerations include designing the structure, educating the decision-makers, collaborating, planning, training, developing follow-up activities, ensuring maintenance, and providing leadership. These are the topics we discuss in the following sections.

Designing the Structure of a Professional Development Program

A first step in designing a teacher development program is to determine who should assume this responsibility. Careful thought needs to be given to who should be involved on the design team. It may be an existing group, such as an inservice team, or the administrative team with added teacher representation. Another possibility is a group composed of chairs from existing groups such as curriculum committees. Or it might be a newly formed group of staff representing all schools and the community.

Regardless of how the group is formed, three primary criteria should be considered in selecting members: relevance, expertise, and jurisdiction (Owens, 1984). *Relevance* refers to including those who will be most affected by decisions made in the staff development program. *Expertise* refers to including those having expert knowledge in the area of the decisions. *Jurisdiction* refers to including those who have the authority to carry out the decisions. A fourth criterion to consider is influence within the system, regardless of the individual's position. This may mean including certain teacher leaders or community members.

Jurisdiction is a particularly important consideration. Team members collectively or individually must have—or have access to—necessary authority to carry out what is planned. If they don't, the team's efforts may be an interesting exercise at best, but ultimately a futile one and a waste of everyone's time.

The most commonly used decision-making groups in professional development programs are district and building staff development teams. However, in small districts or districts composed of many scattered small schools, a unified elementary team is often more appropriate. Examples of other groups that may be formed to play specific roles in a professional development program are support teams for new teachers, action research teams, or principal assistance teams.

Existing groups can also play important roles and make significant contributions. Involvement of the school board and administration is obviously critical to the success of the program. Curriculum task forces or parent groups may assume particular roles. These roles should be clearly delineated in the management plan.

Groups may be ongoing, such as a district professional development team, or ad hoc, such as a teacher research team. Often groups are abolished when their work is done and reconstituted only when the need for that task reemerges. As Roland Barth wryly notes in *Run School Run* (1980), "Standing committees generally engage in a lot of standing around!" Interest in serving on committees is rarely a problem if there is a specific need for the committee and it has a defined beginning and end.

What roles the groups should play may be determined by the schools' needs and interests, or they may be mandated by local, state, or federal government. Commonly identified responsibilities include assessment and goal setting, identification of available resources, program design, and evaluation. Less common, yet equally important, tasks might include upgrading the knowledge of responsible parties, establishing linkages with outside staff development resources, informing building staff of new legislation regarding teacher certification, and disseminating to staff recent research on effective teaching. Tasks may be general such as "maintain and support the interest and enthusiasm of responsible parties," or quite specific, such as "prepare a district policy on staff development" or "assist individual teachers in resolving special classroom behavioral problems."

Frequently, a given responsibility may be divided up, with several different groups involved in different ways. For example, the school board, a district leadership team, and building-based professional growth teams may all play important roles in the tasks of assessment and goal setting. The board is responsible for determining the general focus of the assessment; the district team is responsible for identifying a common assessment method comparing results from all schools; and building teams are responsible for using and analyzing the data collected, as well as gathering additional information to help them formulate priority building goals. Such differentiation is clearly articulated in a written staff development management plan.

Central to the design of a staff development program that fits the context of a given school organization is an understanding of the school system it will be supporting. Conditions that both support and inhibit improvement efforts in the participating schools should be identified at the start of the design process. Such information forms the parameters within which the system will operate. Conditions may be external to the system, such as recent legislation requiring the development of teacher support teams, or they may be internal, such as a strongly supportive superintendent. Some forces, such as a district's small size, may be both supportive and restraining.

Negative forces can be viewed as challenges to turn around. For example, at the initiation of a particular improvement effort, a critical, vocal, and influential school board member was identified as a major obstacle. She was invited to serve on the school's professional development team and within a year became the chair of the group as well as its leading proponent. Both the budget and available released time increased fourfold. Involvement and knowledge led to her commitment and support.

Collaborative, open discussion about positive and negative conditions that affect a school community can deepen a team's understanding of the system. It can also uncover hidden agendas that might sabotage the program at a later point. Once uncovered, potential obstacles can be dealt with constructively. Many groups discover that there are far more forces supporting improvement than impeding it. The result is renewed hope and enthusiasm as well as important information to be acted upon when actually designing and operating the program.

Creative visioning of both the who and what of staff development should be encouraged. Often groups get locked into a narrow and restricted vision of what professional development can/should be. The vision of a district team planning inservice days is not only uninspiring, but limited in effectiveness. A variety of functions should be explored, as should the use of a variety of responsible groups.

At the start of the design process, time for reading, discussion, and reflection about what successful staff development looks like and possible alternative approaches should be provided. Structured activities to identify individuals' assumptions about professional growth, define terms, and creatively paint a vision of an ideal system are particularly useful in refining and expanding the knowledge and thinking of team members. They are also wonderful team-building activities, building a common language among staff that helps them to talk and think more deeply about what they are doing. This process of educating, reeducating, and building norms of collegiality is never ending. It is equally important for persons who later become involved in the implementation of the staff development program.

The basic structure of a teacher development program is usually simple to start with. Waiting to create the perfect system at the start means it will probably never get off the paper. The important thing is to establish some basic parameters, such as the centrality of the school (as opposed to having a district focus), and *do* something. Refinement of the support system can come after practice.

Educating the Decision-Makers

The quality of a staff development program is determined by the quality of the decisions that drive it. And quality decisions mean informed decision-makers. The importance of continued education of responsible parties in a support system cannot be overemphasized. Too often teachers are thrown into new decision-making roles without appropriate support and knowlege. The ensuing decisions are frequently poor ones, adding to the conviction held by some that teachers should have limited decision-making power. The same applies to community members.

Persons new to decision-making roles regarding professional development are usually unfamiliar with the area and start off with a limited "workshop mentality." Their vision needs to be expanded. The design team and other responsible parties should be familiar with alternative approaches and principles of effective staff development. Time is too scarce to be spent on activities that won't make a difference. Likewise, there is no need to reinvent the wheel. Research and sound practice have contributed much knowledge and many strategies that can and should be drawn on in designing a new or improving an old program.

Information and assistance relative to a group's responsibilities may also be needed. For example, information about a variety of assessment methods would enable a group responsible for assessment to make better decisions about tools to use. Similarly, a professional growth team responsible for providing opportunities should know about alternative approaches, such as those included in this book, as well as good planning techniques.

Facilitating Collaboration

One shouldn't assume that people know how to work together and make thoughtful decisions, particularly if isolation has been the norm.

Training in team-building skills is often needed. Collaboration is hard work, very untidy, and often quite fragile. Individuals who are used to or prefer concrete, linear planning often experience intense frustration. Letting go of ideas and really listening to others' views is not easy.

Training in team building can help enormously to heighten a group's ability to work collaboratively with people of different viewpoints. It is particularly useful in meeting inevitable conflict and minimizing real or imagined barriers between teachers and administrators. A memorable occasion for one elementary teacher was the first time she dared disagree with the superintendent. She was particularly pleased when the ensuing group decision, which the superintendent supported, reflected her position. Just as teachers learn to openly express their views to administrators, administrators learn that they can work with and learn from teachers without losing their power.

Groups also need time to mature. Teams typically go through four phases of development—forming, storming, norming, and performing—that occur in predictable sequence, although varying in intensity and timing. Learning to expect them, understand them, not be intimidated by them, intervene when necessary, and recognize that great things can happen overnight—these are some ways of coping with the messiness of collaboration. In their second session, one team threatened to boycott a staff development program. They had entered the conflict stage and begun to deal with some thorny issues. And they were looking to others to blame. After an evening of rest and relaxation for some and heated discussion for others, they were ready to assume responsibility for their problem and deal constructively with it. Time was all that was needed.

Some administrators find sharing responsibility with teachers extremely difficult; many find it impossible. Even well-intentioned principals often need assistance in learning new behaviors relative to decentralizing authority. One well-respected principal, for example, returned from an effective schooling conference ready to implement a new staff development program he had just heard about. He was inadvertently about to bypass entirely the school's very active staff development committee, which was responsible for identifying and planning relevant improvement programs for the school. When this was pointed out to him, however, he quickly recognized what he was doing and commented that he was getting carried away with his own enthusiasm—resorting to his old mode of decision making. He needed to be reminded to share information on improvement programs with the team so they could share his enthusiasm and make informed decisions with him.

Planning

Care must be taken in determining a focus for professional growth activities. A good assessment is needed; however, assessment is one of the most abused of common planning processes. School staff often grab onto the first "neat" assessment instrument that comes along without first determining what they want to find out. All information gathering techniques, including the ever-favored nominal group process, have their disadvantages as well as advantages. If an instrument is not thoughtfully and appropriately matched to the needs and context of a particular school, the result is a collection of irrelevant and useless information. Predesigned instruments are particularly seductive because development time can be skipped. Inappropriate data collection adds layers to the frequently and rightfully tarnished reputation of needs assessment.

It is extremely important to remember that assessment is only one step in the improvement process. The goal is to improve learning, not to conduct an assessment, yet it's easy to get stuck on it. The intent behind an assessment is to pave a thoughtful direction for improvement. It makes sense to use information from different sources to prepare the way, but it can be overdone. One high school team, for example, spent an entire year doing the "perfect" assessment: they carefully and thoughtfully selected different types of information to gather and methods to do so, involved the rest of the staff in the process, personalizing both the giving and receiving of the data, and shared with them the results of the assessment. The outcome was clearly articulated and endorsed objectives for professional growth. By this time, however, the team was worn out and never got to determining what to *do* about the objectives, much less to actually do anything. The momentum was lost. A balance is needed between the typical quick and superficial needs assessment and an in-depth, exhaustive one that saps time and energy.

Initially, many school staffs are reluctant to look at instruction as a focus for improvement, particularly if trust and a climate for professional development have not been established. School climate factors such as good communication and discipline are common places to start. Not only are they less threatening, but they are usually necessary conditions for instructional changes and improvement.

One accomplished district team spent two years involving staff, developing building teams, and focusing on immediate concerns with classroom management and teacher stress before turning to instructional issues. Only then did they begin to work on effective and alternative instructional strategies, recognizing that they had not been ready for such activity when they initiated their program. As one teacher noted: "Knowing where we are now, it's easy to look back and say, 'we should have done this sooner,' but I don't think we could or should have. We did what we needed to then and are now ready to move on. We're now ready to help one another look at instruction."

Forcing a fledgling team to look at instruction and expose themselves before they have established trust and good communication skills may defeat the purpose of collaboration. However, reaching instruction as the ultimate goal of staff development is a bias we hold dear—if nothing better happens between students and teachers, it's time to ask, "Is it worth it?"

The selection or design of quality professional growth activities or approaches is a major hurdle for many staff development planners. Success requires appropriate matching of approaches to local needs (identified through a careful, but not overly complicated, assessment process), thoughtful planning, and conscious application of what is known about effective staff development. This frequently does not occur. Short-term, isolated activities, unlikely to do anything beyond increase awareness, continue to be the wearying norm in many school districts. Also, planners often grab onto the first interesting and relevant approach or person they come upon rather than identifying alternative possibilities and carefully considering which ones are most appropriate for their own situation.

Our hope is that planners will consider two things. First, keeping in mind their specific goals and the assumptions that they have about professional development, they should consider approaches in addition to traditional inservice workshops. Some of these are described in detail in this book. These approaches may constitute the *how* of professional development. The *what* is a second consideration—there may be a curriculum area, an instructional concern, or a dimension of school climate that requires attention. Selection of appropriate staff development activities should consider both the what and how.

Finding Time

A critical issue in planning staff development activities is time—in particular, how to find it. Time is a serious problem. Learning takes time and there is simply not enough to be reflective, consider different approaches, learn new materials and behaviors, practice them, and reflect on their impact. Teacher learning must be viewed as an integral part of school life—rather than a frivolous extracurricular activity—and time must be allocated for it.

To start, an expanded number of student-free days throughout the year for professional growth activities is necessary. In addition, a number of personal professional days should be designated for released time to participate in specific activities.

Student-free days can be during the summer, either as a systemwide extension of the school year (for teachers) or on an activity-by-activity basis. Summer is an ideal time for planning activities, such as designing a support system, developing curriculum, and introducing certain new materials or practices. Summer is not appropriate, however, for learning complex new skills to be used in the classroom. Immediate practice with feedback, help in tailoring new practices to individual students and classroom environments, support in problem solving these can only be done during the school year when the teacher has access to his or her classroom.

Released time during the school year requires that teachers' students be covered by others. Some strategies for this include

- using substitute teachers;
- training and maintaining a substitute cadre that can conduct specially planned enrichment activities in classrooms, eliminating the need for teachers to prepare a day's work for their class and then worry about how it's being delivered;
- principals and other building staff substituting for teachers;
- employing a roving substitute one day a week so teachers can have short (e.g., one- to two-hour) periods of time to observe or coach each other, gather research data in their classrooms, etc.; and
- establishing 'teacher triads' where one teacher can periodically teach two classes, freeing up a colleague to observe, coach, or assist in the third teacher's classroom.

Ways to release teachers during the school year can also be discovered through a serious reexamination of the structure and schedule of the school. Many schools use a weekly or monthly early-release day, for example, to give teachers an afternoon to participate in staff development activities. More radical restructuring may allow for differentiated roles, team teaching, larger class sizes for certain kinds of activities, and scheduling special teachers in ways that allow particular groups of teachers to work together. Even more serious districtwide restructuring has been used to provide extended sabbatical periods for teachers; in Pittsburgh, for example, teachers have eight-week sabbaticals during which they attend a laboratory school to enhance their teaching effectiveness.

Time is also a red herring. Sometimes the real issue is not lack of time, but better use of the time that does exist. Faculty meetings and inservice days are prime examples. Both are often underutilized or used ineffectively. Faculty meetings could be used for solving important school problems, sharing learnings from conferences, even training in new skills. A string of inservice days throughout the year could be used for work on a single topic or skill, rather than offering the usual smorgasbord.

Sometimes the real problem is not lack of time but innovation overload—too many new programs going on at the same time. District and school leaders have a responsibility to set priorities and then protect and limit the number of new programs or approaches, particularly those requiring significant changes in behaviors. More is rarely better. Individual staff, in turn, have a responsibility to limit their own involvement. It is possible to say no.

As the spirit of collegiality and professionalism grows in a school, the boundaries between professional growth activities and daily practice become less artificial. A breakfast discussion group, a ten-minute observation while students are at gym, or a faculty meeting can become professionally stimulating events that don't require additional time.

Implementing

While planning is critically important, the worth of a teacher development program will ultimately be determined by the quality of the opportunities that are selected and offered and the way they are carried out. There is a tendency for a team to think its job is finished once a good program or approach has been identified. While this may be understandable, it can be lethal.

The changes in knowledge, skill, behaviors and/or attitudes that we hope are the outcomes of teacher development programs require attention and assistance over time. The type and nature of assistance can be guided by what we noted earlier about how the needs of teachers change as they are introduced to something new; their questions progress from being more self-oriented, "What is it, and how can it affect me?", to taskoriented, "How do I do it?" and "How can I best organize and manage it?", and finally to more impact-oriented, "How can I make it work better for my students?" (Hall & Loucks, 1978).

Thus the implementation of teacher development activities begins with supplying descriptive information and a clear picture for both teachers and administrators of how it will affect their lives in the classroom and the school. Usually such general information is supplied as part of the selection process, when others beyond the team are involved. Whether or not this occurs during planning, it is important that as a first step in implementation, information be shared with all who will be engaged in the activity. Informal discussion about such information may be enough to get some professional growth approaches, such as mentoring or networking, off the ground.

Staff development activities that are focused on the development of specific teaching skills or techniques, however, require more intensive, concrete, and formal training, followed by practice, discussion, and possibly coaching. Training in small increments rather than all at once is a sound approach. It allows parts of the new practice to be mastered one at a time and problems dealt with as they come up. At least a year of follow-up support, including problem-solving gatherings, in-classroom demonstrations and assistance, materials and logistical help—these important elements of support for change—should be planned for by the teacher development team.

While we are trying in this book to give attention to teacher development approaches other than training workshops, such activities are often an important component of the alternative approaches we discuss and are, we acknowledge, the primary vehicle for staff development in our education systems. Good workshops, therefore, are part of the responsibility of a staff development team.

A workshop is defined by Wood and his associates (1981, p.73) as, "a group of people participating in structured activities during a specified period of time to accomplish predetermined goals and tasks which lead to new understandings and changes in professional behavior." As they note, effective workshops consist of

- *Orientation activities* that provide participants with a clear understanding of the objectives, activities, expectations, and connections to their day-to-day reality.

- *Learning teams, groups, or pairs,* formed and developed as part of the workshop's activities, that provide collegiality for mastering workshop content and ongoing support for practice and problem solving after the workshop is over. This may be through peer partnering arrangements, described in our Peer Coaching section.

- *Choices for participants* that allow individualization of the mode (e.g., listening, reading, discussing) and variety in the content. Options may be tailored to match learning styles (McCarthy, 1980) or the particular concerns expressed by teachers (Hall & Loucks, 1978).
- *Experiential learning* that provides participants with opportunities to try out the principles, skills, or other learnings through simulations or laboratory situations.
- *Feedback* to the workshop leader that allows participants to voice their feelings about the experience and is timely enough to adjust content and process as needed.
- *Commitment to implement* what has been learned through a plan developed by each participant at the end of the workshop, indicating how, when, and with what extra help the learnings of the workshop will be tried out.

When a workshop involves the development of new skills and behaviors, cycles of practice in the classroom with coaching and feedback are critically important to the training's having lasting impact (Joyce & Showers, 1982).

The trainer is a key to success of the training experience. A good trainer has expertise in the new skills or practice being introduced, experience in their use, and an understanding of how adults learn and the importance of a supportive, risk-free learning environment. Experience with the ideas or practice being presented is particularly important, since teachers are highly critical of experts who "haven't been in the classroom in 15 years," and rightly so. The trainer must be a credible teacher, not necessarily a current teacher, who can help answer the teachers' very specific "what if. . ." questions.

Providing Follow-up Support

The importance of follow-up support for participants in staff development activities cannot be overemphasized. It is as important as the initial training. As Guskey (1986) persuasively maintains, "Since. . . changes (in teacher attitudes and beliefs) occur mainly after implementation takes place and evidence of improved student learning is gained, it is continued support *following* the initial training that is most crucial." Our experience confirms this. No matter how good the training is, it is unlikely to stick without continued follow-up support. Learning to behave differently in the classroom requires lots of practice and support over time. Without follow-up support, most teachers understandably resort to old, comfortable patterns.

Follow-up should be built into any professional development program design, whether a two-day workshop on peer coaching or a two-week institute on alternative teaching strategies. A good example of its importance comes from a particularly effective training program in western Maine. The programs' objectives were 1) to refine or expand participants' teaching strategies and 2) to develop local support mechanisms to encourage continued use and refinement of the strategies.

The second objective was purposely constructed to highlight the importance of follow-up support, and two two-day follow-up sessions were written into the design of the program. The first year these trainer-led sessions consisted of review and discussion of participant teaching videotapes and focused on group sharing and problem solving. The second year the participating school teams assumed this leadership role. Time was also allocated during the initial training institute for the teams to develop an action plan for follow-up support in their own buildings. One elementary team observed and coached each other and met monthly to review videotapes and discuss application of specific teaching strategies across disciplines. They also started a library of lesson plans using particular models. A high school team worked in pairs, planned weekly peer observations and feedback sessions, and also discussed learnings and struggles at faculty meetings. Support was thus provided by a variety of players in a variety of ways. The program was soon able to wean itself of outside trainers, with teachers teaching and helping one another.

Staff development teams can play an important role in making follow-up sessions effective. They accomplish this through continued negotiation with trainers to assure they are doing what the team wants them to do. This takes time and while we know there is never enough of it, abdication of this responsibility frequently leads to mismatched and unsuccessful programs. One consultant, for example, was offended when the school planning team modified his agenda for a two-day follow-up session on instructional strategies, saying that he was used to getting paid as the expert and that he resented someone else tampering with his design. The team gently and yet firmly expressed their belief in his expertise, but also in their own sensitivity to their staff. The modification was made, the program was a success, and the consultant learned that the team was right and that he could, and sometimes needed to, adapt his own teaching style.

Ensuring Maintenance and Continuity

Organizational structure and authorization of a professional development program will assure its existence. It will not, however, assure the vitality or quality of the program. Both conditions are necessary for a professional development program to be maintained over time. An effective program that is more than an artifact requires continued and conscious attention to its members, its content, and its structure.

One routine that ensures continuity is the careful induction of new participants. Teachers newly involved in leadership positions in a professional development program, for example, are sometimes uninformed, bewildered, and overwhelmed with the scope and content of their new role. Assistance, support, and training in staff development content and processes are needed. One district established a policy where new members of its district and building teams spent three months shadowing veteran members of the team at their meetings and work sessions before actually replacing them and assuming their responsibilities. This way they eased into the job and were provided support and assistance in doing so. Another group requested training in group process and shared decision making for new as well as veteran members of their teams. This was provided at their annual "maintenance retreat."

Veteran participants also need attention. They may become complacent, their enthusiasm dulled. Infusion of new information on a regular basis helps. Information stimulates new thought and practice and can revitalize a program and its members. It also enables and empowers people to make good decisions. As noted earlier, a successful professional development program assumes informed decisionmakers who are knowledgeable about promising practices related to teaching and learning, for adults as well as students. Decision-makers should also be aware of resources they might tap, such as conferences, validated staff development programs, or people networks. This means that people who regularly receive such information, usually administrators, must be sure to pass it on to other members of the professional development teams so they can make informed decisions themselves.

Maintenance of a professional development program also requires continued attention to the quality of the specific activities that it supports.

Teachers and administrators become excited and committed to successful programs that they see helping them do their jobs better. If the programs don't effect change, their interest and enthusiasm wanes. Also, time and resources are too limited to waste on programs that don't make a difference. Sometimes, when a staff development activity doesn't work, the content is at fault. More often, however, it is the way in which it is conducted. Good planning, matching of a given activity with local needs, and careful modeling of successful practices dramatically increase the number of quality professional development programs.

Continual evaluation of staff development programming helps to ensure its quality, and because it is so important we have chosen to discuss program evaluation at length in the book's final chapter. But the basic structure of a professional development program also needs to be examined regularly and modified as necessary. Even mature systems should be reassessed periodically. The context, members, and needs of schools change over time and may suggest a different structuring. Often the change called for is from a simple to a more differentiated structure, particularly as members of a program learn more about effective practices and alternative approaches.

Sometimes the reverse is true. A staff development program in one district, for example, had evolved into a sophisticated, highly differentiated, informal system with unarticulated norms. As long as the same members remained, it worked. Over a three-year period, however, the central office administrators left the district and 80% of the members of the building teams were new. At the annual spring maintenance meeting, a veteran staff developer realized that she was in the minority. The previously held vision of teacher-driven staff development was no longer common, nor even recognized by all. The old structure and mission didn't fit the new players. They needed to go back to basics, to build a shared vision and new norms, possibly different ones. They needed to go back through a thoughtful process of reexamining their beliefs and goals regarding professional development and rebuilding appropriate structures to help them act on these beliefs.

Providing Leadership and Support

Throughout this chapter we have discussed the contributions leadership and support make to the development and maintenance of professional development programs. Without reservation we can say they are critical to a system's success. A support system will not get started without them. And the best training in the world will not stick if classroom and school environments work against mastering a new practice or refining an old one. Leadership has much to say about what that environment is like.

We prefer to use the general term leadership because it is clear that no one role group—principals are a case in point—should be solely relied on to make professional development a success. If a staff development program is districtwide, then superintendents, assistant superintendents, staff developers, curriculum coordinators, and teachers can all play leadership functions. At the building level, principals, assistant principals, department heads, team leaders, and teachers all play leadership roles (Cox, 1983).

Staff need to know clearly that professional growth is valued, expected, and supported. Official school leaders such as superintendents and principals do this in a variety of ways. At the initiation of a teacher development program, this usually means lots of formal and informal talk about professional development, its importance, the intent and nature of a good program, and how it might affect the lives of the staff in classrooms and schools. In one suburban school district, for example, the superintendent presented an overview of a proposed teacher support system developed by the district's staff development team in the summer. He spoke quietly but eloquently about the importance of learning for everyone. This was followed by discussions at faculty meetings in each school building, led by the building principal and teacher members of the staff development team. Lots of thinking and discussion about professional growth were stimulated. It was a good start.

Such visible talk and presence by school leaders is equally important as specific professional growth approaches are selected and carried out. At the start of a new program, clear direction and statement of expectations for use of what is learned are important leadership roles. Is the new approach important to the leaders of the school? Is it important that all teachers be involved? Is it important that they be involved in certain ways? Without seeming too heavy handed, school leaders can help teachers avoid rejecting a new approach without giving it a fair trial or watering it down so much that the hoped-for outcomes are not achieved.

Simple words of encouragement can also help, especially through the inevitable floundering that accompanies trying something new. Principal participation as a learner in some of the staff development activities is another particularly powerful way to convey a belief in the importance of continued learning for everyone.

Words and presence are not enough, however. Provision of released time for planning, access to consultants, and training are needed for most professional growth strategies to be carried out. Without these concrete statements of support, a teacher development system is unlikely to go very far. Organizing schedules to facilitate teachers' work with one another is a particularly useful and critical means of support. Time to work together is repeatedly identified by teachers as the single most valuable component of good support programs. School leaders can be heroes if they can make this happen.

Another kind of support function that school administrators in particular can help with is clearing the environment to the extent possible of things that compete with a new approach for the teacher's attention. It may mean ignoring (for now) other school or district goals or priorities; refusing visitors, no matter how interested they are in observing the new approach; turning down other new programs or materials; and eliminating additional responsibilities, events, or activities that the teacher must attend to. An environment that protects the teacher from continual crises is one where new ideas, strategies, and practices have a chance of being mastered and used in classrooms. This support role can be thought of as running interference.

Professional development programs must begin with and must continue to enjoy strong leadership and support from a variety of people and in a variety of ways. The web these functions create will serve to protect the program from the constant bombardment of demands and crises that are part and parcel of our education system and will allow it to maintain a resilience to adapt to the changing needs and contexts of our teachers.

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4

Alternative Approaches to Teacher Development

A district- or school-based staff development program with the elements described in the last section creates a strong foundation for teacher growth. However, using that foundation to merely sponsor workshops for teachers far underachieves the potential. There are an enormous number of alternatives to traditional inservice training, many of them capable of benefiting both individuals and their schools. The challenge is to select approaches that mesh with individual, school, and district goals—and also build on each other in meaningful ways.

The following sections profile a dozen different approaches that can be used to carry out staff development activities—a variety of organizing mechanisms and strategies for working with teachers. While our presenting them in this way may communicate a recommendation to read, study, and make rational choices among them, we know that the real world doesn't work like that. Instead, opportunities arise for training in an approach to effective teaching; teachers return from a conference enthusiastic about peer coaching; the local university wants to collaborate on an action research project; or a new state law requires mentors for beginning teachers. Such spontaneous opportunities influence decisions, and well they should. There is no best combination of approaches, no best entry point for new staff development programs. We include these descriptive sections so that readers can experience some strong options, learn more about what is involved in pursuing them, and reflect on the best way to use these options to meet professional development goals.

The approaches we include are:

- teacher as researcher
- implementing innovative practices
- clinical supervision
- peer coaching
- advising teachers
- teachers' centers
- teacher institutes
- networks
- partnerships
- training of trainers

mentoring beginning teachers	individually guided professional development

These are not the only possible approaches, but we have selected these particular ones for several reasons. First, they have been used widely and shown to make a difference; that is, they have field validity. Second, they are well documented in the literature, many with a research base. Third, when done well, these approaches embody the critical attributes of good staff development discussed in Chapter 2. And, finally, they have the potential to go beyond the individual teacher, contributing to achievement of the goals of the school. They are not isolated incidents or experiences that concern only one teacher, as are, for example, teacher sabbaticals and conference attendance. While the latter are certainly useful, we haven't considered them as robust enough to include as full-blown staff development approaches.

For each approach, we've provided a snapshot of what it looks like in practice and a description of the assumptions on which it is based. We discuss the necessary conditions that must exist for it to be implemented successfully and describe the benefits to students, teachers, and schools. We then provide a commentary, a free-flowing discussion of the issues and concerns, the cautions and pitfalls, that we and others have experienced in using these approaches. Finally, we list a variety of resources for those interested in learning more: key articles that discuss the approach; descriptions of the approach as it is used in school and district settings; and sometimes some programs and/or resources in other formats (such as videotapes).

But how does one begin to investigate various approaches to teacher development? One way is to consider a particular situation, question, or problem at hand and see which of these approaches might help address it. We've suggested several situations below and indicated the sections we think it might be helpful to consult.

If your situation, question, or problem is:	*You might consider this approach:*
"Our teachers need to expand their knowledge and methods of teaching science/writing/drug abuse prevention."	**Implementing an innovative program** developed elsewhere Sending selected teachers to a **training-of-trainers** workshop dealing with these issues **Networking** with other schools or districts with similar needs

	Sponsoring or sending teachers to an **institute**
"Teachers are feeling very isolated."	**Peer coaching** Establishing an **advising teacher** program Providing **mentors for beginning teachers** **Establishing a teacher center** so they have a place to go and work together on their own issues
"Our teachers are in a rut. They can't adapt to changes in our population and in the curriculum because they don't know other ways of approaching instruction."	Linking them with local universities or businesses through a **partnership** arrangement to expand their vision **Networking** with others around common issues and concerns to learn some workable solutions
"We have a mature, experienced staff. They are ready to refine their practice and see if new approaches would yield even better results with students. What can we offer that will stretch and renew these veteran teachers?"	Engaging them in a **teacher-as-researcher** activity Supporting their **individually guided professional development** Sponsoring or sending them to an **institute** Providing links to the world outside their classrooms through **networks** and **partnerships**
"Our teachers have heard a lot about effective teaching and feel that as a staff, we ought to assess our strengths, improve on weaknesses, and give the public a sense that we're an effective staff and school."	Providing **mentors for beginning teachers** **Peer coaching** to promote sharing and collegiality Providing **advising teachers** with expertise in particular teaching strategies **Implementing innovative practices** that foster generic teaching skills Providing **clinical supervision**

Teacher as Researcher

In one school, four teachers volunteered to team with a researcher and a staff developer to engage in what was called "interactive research and development." Together, the teachers defined a problem that was pressing: to determine why their students didn't seem to have enough time on task and how to increase it. With the researcher they devised some data collecting strategies, gathered data in their own and in each others' classrooms, and learned that classroom interruptions were the cause of the problem. With the staff developer, the teachers devised solutions to the problem and developed means of sharing their learnings with others (Tikunoff & Ward, 1983).

In another district, teachers were offered the opportunity to participate in action research. They developed ideas for studies, learned about research strategies, developed study designs, collected data, and discussed findings with peer critics. They then developed reports of their learnings that made them relevant to other teachers (Hovda & Kyle, 1984).

Teachers participating in the Lawrence Hall of Science EQUALS project conducted research projects before they even began their training. Their charge was to select from a number of possible survey questions regarding the project's purpose: to decrease math avoidance among female students. They chose to explore such issues as enrollment in their schools' math classes and their students' career aspirations. Armed with their learnings, they participated in EQUALS training with enthusiasm and interest in what they could do to help with what they had learned were some real problems in their schools (Kreinberg, 1980).

These scenarios illustrate a unique approach to staff development: that of engaging teachers in research. The notion of teachers becoming involved in meaningful ways in research has been "discovered" by people in a number of different roles. Researchers have learned that by working closely with teachers to not only conduct research, but also to define the research questions, the gap between research and practice is significantly narrowed. Staff developers have learned that teachers engaged in identifying and answering their most pressing questions not only find important solutions but are also energized by the challenge. Finally, teachers have learned that they possess large amounts of knowledge and expertise, and this can contribute in many ways to their ongoing growth and development as well as that of others.

Underlying Assumptions

The teacher is an intelligent, inquiring individual with legitimate expertise and important experience.

Unlike the 'deficit model' which assumes that the purpose of teacher development is to determine what a teacher needs and get it for him or her, this strategy begins with what a teacher knows and relies on that knowledge to explore and formulate new understandings. Even those action research variations that present research findings to teachers assume the teachers will bring their own understandings to their experimentation with the new knowledge.

This approach further assumes that the teacher is interested in learning about the phenomena of teaching, in inquiring into those aspects that are problematic, murky, or particularly challenging. Such a desire to explore is a prerequisite, while research knowledge or skills are not.

Teachers are inclined to search for data to answer pressing questions and to reflect on the data to formulate solutions.

This assumption goes a step beyond the last, in that it creates an image of a teacher as a rational problem solver, with the inclination and associated patience to articulate questions and search for answers. Taking the step to first collect information to get those answers, the teacher relies on data to find out "the truth," rather than solely on intuition or automatic reflexes.

By contributing to or formulating their own questions, and by collecting their own data to answer them, teachers will develop new understandings that will contribute to their professional growth.

Educational research has typically been done "on" teachers and not either "with" or "by" them. Researchers have made the assumption that research relevant to teachers would be picked up by them and used. Th action research strategy for staff development assumes that a more intense teacher involvement with research will increase the likelihood that they will use research results, thus contributing to their growth as teachers. Helping teachers answer their own questions is far superior to giving them answers to someone else's questions, assuming that the someone else does not have the same questions as the teachers.

What It Looks Like in Practice

What makes this teacher development strategy different from other types of research is that the teacher either defines the research questions or contributes to their definition in a meaningful way. The context, then, can vary. Sometimes teachers are part of a collaborative team that includes a researcher. Other times teachers pursue their own research studies, with opportunities to discuss their progress along the way and with a researcher to consult with on various issues. Still other variations present teachers with relevant research, which is then used has a basis for collecting and analyzing data from their own classrooms (Hopkins, 1985).

Hovda and Kyle (1984) identify a number of steps in conducting action research:

1. Identify interested participants.
2. Provide context for the activities.
3. Complete "trial runs" of commonly focused topics to provide experience in research strategies and analysis and to help the teachers gain confidence.
4. Share several study ideas.
5. Discuss and provide examples of research methods.
6. Offer advice by peer critics about where further elaboration or clarification is needed.
7. Discuss findings, problems, emergent questions, and suggestions.
8. Discuss completed studies and ways of writing about them; share with peer critics.
9. Discuss questions such as:
   - What issues do the studies reveal?

  - What do the studies let us know?
  - What impact might the findings have on future practice?
  - What have we learned about action research as a process of professional development?

10. Explore the possibility of having the studies published, presented, and/or shared in some way with others (adapted from Hogue, Pankake & Schiller, 1986).

The questions pursued through action research are typically idiosyncratic to the teachers pursuing them. However, they are usually focused on the behaviors and processes of teaching and learning. For example, a teacher may want to know how students manage their independent learning experiences when she or he is working with a group; or how students interact with mainstreamed handicapped students in the classroom; or how different students approach different kinds of writing assignments; or what "a day in the life of a sophomore" reveals in terms of different teaching strategies and teacher expectations. All of these interests can be turned into researchable questions.

Research methods don't have to be highly technical. Data can be collected by observation, logging, interviewing, and surveying, among other techniques. Some of the more important research issues to consider are whether there have been enough data collected (e.g., incidents observed, students surveyed, days logged) to be able to generalize; whether the collection was in some way representative of the usual (e.g., observations or interviews weren't all of the same kind of student; observations weren't all made at the same time or with the same kind of lesson); and whether there are competing explanations for what was learned (e.g., one might have "learned" that Teacher A's management strategies allow for fewer interruptions from outside the classroom than Teacher B's, only to discover that Teacher B's room is right next to the office and Teacher A's is in a remote part of the building). Having a researcher on a team, or as an ongoing consultant, will allow useful discussions of data collection and analysis strategies and issues, ensuring that the results of the research are valid.

Sharing learnings from teacher-conducted research can make a significant contribution to teacher development. Opportunities to write about a research project, to present findings to various audiences, to participate in discussions of the implications of learnings for teaching and schools, and to develop materials that other teachers can use—these are just some ways that teachers can increase their skills and knowledge at the same time as they are feeling rewarded for their work. In some cases teacher research has been reported in journals. Other times staff developers have teamed with teachers to package what they've learned into training sessions, guidebooks, or other materials that teachers can use.

Conditions Necessary for Success

Like most staff development strategies, this one requires that teachers have some time released from direct responsibility for students to fully participate. While data collection usually takes place in the classroom, it may be impossible for the teacher to actively teach while collecting data. Likewise, if data collection is collaborative, it is necessary for teachers to be able to spend time in each others' classrooms. Further, reflecting on research findings *must* be done at a time and in a place where thinking is fostered and interruptions are minimized. Insights simply cannot develop when class begins in ten minutes. Thus time and space are necessary prerequisites. The amount will vary depending on the approach.

The availability of research expertise is another necessity. This does not mean that a bona fide researcher is required, but someone who has had some training and experience in framing appropriate research questions and in designing a variety of kinds of studies would be useful. Because qualitative methodologies lend themselves so well to schools and classrooms, such expertise would also be helpful.

Finally, a commitment to understanding, sharing, and using the results of the research studies is needed. This can be through the participation of a staff developer on the team or in the process; or by involving school or district administrators in roles that help them know what's being studied and engage them in discussing how others might benefit. Studies whose learnings are understood by others, and changes in practice made as a result, will bring greater rewards to both the teacher-researcher and to the school of which he or she is a part.

Benefits

Two studies of teachers as researchers speak eloquently of the impact their experiences have had on participants. Rich (1983) reports that:

- teachers were more self-assured and willing to change
- student behavior, seen as data, became more interesting
- teachers moved from evaluating to documenting what went on in their classrooms

- the focus of teaching changed from teaching students to finding out what their students knew and then trying to help them learn
- teachers asked more questions, listened more, and respected the concerns of their students as legitimate.

In another study, Simmons (1985) reported these changes in teacher participants:

- new knowledge of effective teaching-learning-schooling and of research processes
- changes in thinking skills, habits, or styles (e.g., problem-solving skills, cognitive complexity or flexibility, level of cognitive development)
- changes in attitudes toward themselves as teachers, toward research and its usefulness, and toward the change process
- changes in patterns of communication and collegiality
- development of new theories of action concerning their work as classroom teachers
- changes in teacher classroom practice and in student knowledge, behavior, or attitude.

Commentary

With the glowing reports of the two studies cited above, it seems difficult to refute the efficacy of a teacher-as-researcher strategy for teacher development. There are, however, several issues that should be considered when thinking about using such an approach.

First, it is important to acknowledge that the teacher is the one to frame the research question. Thus, there is no such thing as a bad, trivial, or irrelevant question. A researcher may help frame the question in a way that makes it researchable, but the question itself, if important to the teacher, is worth pursuing.

Administrators who are responsible for an always limited budget may see certain research questions as a waste of time or see others as much more salient to the situation at hand. This may speak for the participation of administrators as "peer" researchers in the collaborative effort, so that at least they can understand the impetus for the research questions, if not influence their choice. But at the same time it is important to realize that answering the question itself is far from the only outcome of this professional development strategy; the process here may be as important as the product.

Another issue is the amount of time and focus this particular approach consumes. The fact is that conducting research is time consuming. There are many steps, and, as noted above, all is lost if not enough time for reflection is budgeted. While it would be useful to conduct a cost/benefit analysis of this approach, since it seems to be quite powerful, it is already clear that it can consume more released time per participant than most approaches profiled in this guide.

In addition, it may be useful to reflect upon when this approach is the most appropriate. It is possible that this is a better approach for teachers who have their classrooms running smoothly than for those who don't. We noted in our introductory chapters that the change process inevitably brings with it an "early use" period characterized by a lack of coordination, unanticipated events and needs, and inability to plan ahead. The experiences of first-year teachers are often like this, as are those of teachers trying to use a really different curriculum or instructional approach. For these people, life is unpredictable; they are concerned about mastering the new behaviors and cutting down on the inordinate amount of time it takes to "just teach."

Perhaps this is not the time to engage such teachers in collaborative research. It may be that when their routines are established and their planning is smooth, they will better be able to focus on a particular problem and take time to reflect on data. So before selecting this strategy for teacher development, a team should consider where teachers are in their teaching.

Finally, it's important to note that continual reflection and analysis is a natural act of a good teacher and that sponsoring, facilitating, or just encouraging informal discussion of teaching issues can be a useful function for teacher developers. Likewise, real teacher involvement in program evaluation encourages the kind of reflection and analysis described in this section as a part of more formal teacher development activities. Here is the potential for making another kind of activity—evaluation—into a professional development experience.

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Examples of the approach in action

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Implementing Innovative Practices

Teachers in a suburban school district had complained for years that the traditional model of one-day workshops for inservice was frustrating because there was no carry-over, continuity of content, or a framework in which to fit the information. Thus, when the assistant superintendent was introduced to the Madeline Hunter model of Effective Teaching she decided to explore how the model would work in the district. After a visit to an implementing school district, she's convinced that it is a possible solution to the teachers' frustrations, as well as to her own. She is faced with the implementation of an innovative practice.

The science department in another school district has just completed revising and updating their elementary science curriculum. The science coordinator and teachers who helped in the revision are all excited about introducing the new materials and lessons. They are faced with the implementation of an innovative practice.

The principal of a middle school has just finished a graduate course in Effective Schools and is eager to make some changes in his school. He is especially concerned because there seems to be no shared mission among teachers, nor do they seem to have high expectations for the students. He has learned how to develop goal statements through consensus-building activities and knows of a special program that helps teachers communicate higher expectations for their students. He is faced with the implementation of innovative practices.

Two high school English teachers spent two weeks in a summer "computers for writing instruction" institute. They learned the

> *value of using computers to motivate and facilitate student writing, and they know several strategies that they are sure will work in their classrooms. But they're also convinced that it would be better for the school if all the English teachers use computers for writing instruction. They are faced with the implementation of an innovative practice.*

Implementing innovative practices is an exciting way for teachers to gain new knowledge and skills, while their students benefit from new materials, strategies, and environments in which to learn. In this section we discuss and illustrate this approach to teacher development.

But first, a couple of definitions. When we use the word *innovative*, we mean something that is new to the individual who is going to use it. It may actually have been around for a long time, but if it requires behaviors that are not routine for the person, then it is considered innovative.

When we use the word *practice*, we are considering any instructional, curricular, or management approach that can be defined by a set of behaviors. The examples above vary greatly in the kinds of practices: effective teaching involves using certain decision rules when designing and conducting a lesson; a science curriculum includes a set of objectives, activities, and materials to use with children; using the findings of effective schools research requires that teachers and administrators behave in certain ways towards the students and towards each other; and using computers to teach writing involves both teachers and students in new ways of interacting with instructional materials. All are examples of practices because they can be described as a set of behaviors.

We should note also that all of the approaches described in this book can be considered innovative practices for the people who use them. Thus the discussion in this section applies as much to a district or school implementing peer coaching as it does to a teacher implementing a new teaching approach.

Underlying Assumptions

Teachers can improve their knowledge, skills, and performance by implementing a new practice.

This means that it is not necessarily important to develop teachers' knowledge, skill, and performance independently of one another. A single new practice, by its very nature, will integrate the three.

In most cases, proven practices that fit the particular needs of teachers' classrooms, schools, and districts are available for them to implement.

A survey of any school, no less any district or state, will reveal scores of practices that meet a wide variety of needs in a wide variety of settings. Many of these practices have undergone careful examination to provide evidence of their effectiveness. There is no need to reinvent the wheel, for there are few areas in which effective practices do not already exist.

Teachers can replicate the core components of new practices and in doing so reap benefits to both themselves and their students.

This final assumption is related in an important way to the last. Teachers can and do use practices developed by others. Not only is it more cost-effective than developing their own, but it also avoids the errors inherent in doing something that has not been tried before and may just as likely fail as succeed.

Key Features

As an approach to teacher development, implementation of innovative practices differs significantly from other approaches. Some differences are:

- A new practice is involved, which is identifiably different from current practice; and it aims to change curriculum, instructional, or management strategies of teachers. The teachers who implement the practice may have developed it, but more often it has been developed elsewhere.
- The practice is introduced over a period of time, and teachers are given different kinds of help and support, tailored to their changing needs.
- Leadership provides a combination of direction, guidance, support, and clear expectations for the outcomes of implementation.

Each of these features is elaborated below as we describe how practice implementation can incorporate critical attributes of successful teacher development.

What It Looks Like in Practice

In Chapter 3 we discussed some issues that need to be considered when designing and implementing a teacher development program. When implementing an innovative classroom practice, many of these same considerations hold true (see also, Loucks-Horsley and Hergert, 1985).

The first phase of implementation is planning. After collecting information about the most pressing needs of the school or district, a team selects one or more needs to be met and undertakes a search for practices that will assist in meeting those needs. Visits to other places where the practices are being used, examination of descriptive and program materials, and attendance at conferences or workshop sessions are all ways to gather information. It is often useful to consider each against a set of common selection criteria, being careful to find a match between the practice and such things as the kinds of students it will serve, the philosophy of the teachers, and the resources of the school and community. Involving other teachers at each step of the search and selection process helps them feel a part of the process.

Implementation of the practice is guided by what we know about the change process. It begins with acquiring descriptive information and a clear picture for both teachers and administrators of how it will affect their lives in the classroom and the school. Then "how-to-do-it" training is conducted, followed by practice, some with coaching. Training in small increments rather than all at once is preferred, so parts can be mastered one at a time and problems dealt with as they come up. At least a year of follow-up support is needed; this may include problem-solving gatherings, in-classroom demonstrations and assistance, and materials and logistical help. At the end of a year, depending on the practice and the progress, different kinds of sessions can be planned that focus on evaluation of progress and refinement of the use of the practice.

Once a new practice is implemented in classrooms, another phase is entered: institutionalization. The school and/or district needs to be sure that structures are in place to continue to nurture teachers' use of the practice. Unfortunately, this rarely happens; new practices are often forgotten after initial training and minimal follow-up. When a practice is institutionalized, its use is written into curriculum guidelines; new or reassigned teachers are automatically trained; it is funded by a line item in the budget; consumable supplies and materials are routinely ordered; and refresher and renewal training sessions are held for teachers (Miles, 1983). The practice becomes part of the everyday life of the school, its teachers, and its students.

Conditions Necessary for Success

First, there must be acknowledgement that change takes time, resources, and attention, so that expectations about what will happen and when are realistic. Second, attention must be paid to the needs and concerns of teachers and administrators, since these change as implementation evolves (Hall & Loucks, 1978). This can happen through involving them in planning for and selecting a new practice, when possible; in sound, hands-on training; and in a variety of appropriate follow-up activities. Third, the best process of implementation will not make up for an ill-chosen practice: either one that does not fit the school population or the norms or styles of the teachers or one that simply does not work. In the development of a high quality practice the realities of teachers and teaching must be kept in mind (Loucks & Zacchei, 1983). Finally, it is necessary to have leadership state clearly that using the practice is a priority and that teachers will get the support they need to do it and to do it well.

Benefits

The implementation of new practices is an effective approach to teacher development, according to a large number of research and evaluation studies (Crandall & Loucks, 1983). It can not only change the behaviors, attitudes, and performance of teachers, but can also significantly change the school environment and the school's capacity to solve its own problems and change itself. This approach to teacher development is also cost-effective; development of a new practice costs approximately 20 times more than implementation of one developed elsewhere. And the experienced trainers that accompany a new practice, by being part of the market economy, are often the best in the field. Finally, and not least important, implementing innovations can increase the teacher's impact on students, whether the intended outcome is the more easily measured increased achievement or the more elusive improved attitude towards learning.

Commentary

One aspect of this approach that makes it different from others, and so may go against the grain of some teacher developers, is that it relies upon the identification of a specific practice that must be used with some fidelity to be successful. It is important for teachers to come to accept that "something someone else developed can be good for me, too, even if my initial reaction is that it won't work, or it isn't worth the effort." Implementing an innovative practice sometimes requires people to suspend disbelief for a while; to trust a trainer; to try something new that feels awkward or even impossible for an extended period of time; to feel unsuccessful before feeling successful. Yet there is considerable research and experience to support the fact that this approach can result in benefits to students and teachers alike (Crandall, 1983).

Further, in this approach, teacher developers are sometimes seen as villains. There is never a situation where absolutely everybody wants to use a certain practice, so teacher developers are sometimes put in a position—or at least perceived to be in the position—of pressuring people to use a practice against their will. The strategy of going with volunteers, at least in the first phase, has some distinct advantages, but there are always the resisters who won't ever come along. Whether or not they ever need to is an important consideration, and one that needs to be discussed by the teacher development team with appropriate administrators and policy-makers.

The good news is that a well-selected practice can be energizing and exciting for teachers. With good support from their administrators, teachers can implement a new practice and be rewarded by student growth in less time and with less effort than by developing their own materials and approaches. The team building that results can transform a school into a place where adults and young people alike want to be, which is certainly a goal of good teacher development programs.

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Clinical Supervision

> *The most important link between a teacher and supervisor is effective communication. . . . Teachers see the justification for supervision and evaluation programs, but they want to be partners in the process (Acheson & Gall, 1980, p. 42).*

Clinical supervision offers teachers an opportunity to be such partners in the process of instructional supervision. Recognized as a useful form of teacher education and staff development, clinical supervision has as its primary emphasis the professional development of the classroom teacher. Unlike other types of supervision that are evaluative in nature, the goal of clinical supervision is to engage teachers in a process that will assist them to further develop and strengthen their instructional skills. Teacher and supervisor form a collaborative partnership, and together they engage in a process of supervision that focuses on analysis of the teacher's instructional skills as applied in the classroom. Maintenance and improvement of these skills is the goal of the process.

It is only through reflection and analysis that one's full potential to learn from experience can be realized. Clinical supervision not only encourages such reflection and analysis, but it also provides the framework of dialogue for accomplishing this. Through the skillful assistance of a clinical supervisor, a teacher can assume a level of personal empowerment that will enable him or her to be continually reflective and analytical about classroom performance.

Underlying Assumptions

A collegial approach to learning, emphasizing mutual interest in development, is more apt to build commitment and involvement than control or summative evaluation.

In the clinical approach to supervision, the supervisor's role shifts from rooting out incompetence to assisting the teacher in fulfilling a primary professional role—continuing to develop instructional skills.

Teacher and supervisor are coparticipants in the supervisory process, and *collegial* becomes the descriptor used to characterize the relationship between the two. Such a relationship is interactive rather than directive, democratic rather than authoritarian, and teacher-centered rather than supervisor-centered.

Reflection and analysis are central means of professional growth. If teachers are given an opportunity to reflect on and analyze their performance, these activities will lead to adjustments and improvements in teaching.

Teaching is an ongoing developmental process. As such, it requires, among other things, that one reflect upon decisions made relative to classroom instruction. In the process of reflecting, one proceeds to analyze the effect of those decisions upon student learning and development. Encouraging teachers to become active problem solvers in their classrooms will result not only in improved instruction, but also in a level of teacher growth that will influence all aspects of the educational process.

Improving teacher classroom behavior will result in improved student learning.

Since its primary goal is improvement of instruction, clinical supervision takes its principal data from direct observation of events in the classroom. In analyzing the data gathered through direct observation, teacher and supervisor discuss connections between the teacher's objectives for the lesson, teacher and pupil behavior relative to the lesson, and the relationship of all these to the pupil's learning. Teacher effectiveness research of the past ten years has shown that the way teachers design and deliver instruction significantly affects what students learn.

What It Looks Like in Practice

The clinical approach to supervision follows a systematic sequence of events directly related to actual classroom instruction, and it is this predictable sequence that distinguishes clinical supervision from more casual approaches to inservice education. The original architect of clinical supervision, Robert Goldhammer, saw five steps occurring in the process of teacher development (Goldhammer, Anderson & Krajewski, 1980). These steps—pre-observation conference, observation, analysis of data, post-observation conference, and evaluation of the clinical supervision experience—still constitute the heart of most clinical supervision programs. Clinical supervision has been varied in the analysis stage by Glickman (1981), differentiated for specific audiences by Glatthorn (1984), and adapted for use by teachers as peer supervision by Cogan (1973). Despite the variations in application, the prescribed stages remain pretty much central.

The pre-observation conference

This is the time to establish a focus, procedures for collecting data, and expectations for the clinical supervision process. The teacher begins by focusing on a concern or question relating to instruction. The supervisor tries to clarify and understand the concern fully and proposes ways of observing the situation in the classroom. The teacher gives the supervisor relevant information about the class, the unit of study, the typical play of events. Then the teacher and supervisor agree on a time for the observation, the purpose of the observation, and a time for the post-observation conference.

The observation

At the appointed time, the supervisor observes the lesson using whatever data collection instruments have been agreed upon. Generally, observers try to be unobtrusive, sitting apart from students and teacher. They may record the class on an audio or videotape or simply use a pencil and paper instrument to note relevant details. A seating chart can serve as a useful tool for diagramming interactions between students and teacher or noting disruptive behavior. Time charts show the frequency of questions, wait time, student talk, and teacher talk. Checklists of desired steps in a lesson can also reveal the degree to which a teacher's procedures meet expectations set in the pre-observation conference. The critical consideration during the data collection and observation phase is recording factual, nonjudgmental information pertaining to agreed-upon objectives. These data will form the basis for information presented to the teacher during the post-observation conference. If an observer wants to make some narrative notes about the context or climate in the classroom, the notes need to be backed by evidence before they can be presented to the teacher.

Analysis of data

After the lesson, the supervisor and the teacher enter into independent analysis phases. The teacher will do this automatically, since the presence of the supervisor raises the teacher's consciousness about her or his work, and the teacher will be noting throughout the lesson and afterward what went well and what did not. The supervisor's analysis will be focused by the pre-observation goals and by his or her experience with teaching in general. This is a time when judgment enters but does not always get expressed between the parties. The supervisor looks for patterns of behavior and tries to generalize what is happening in the class. The supervisor also considers the teacher's relative maturity, experience with teaching, and openness to change. These factors will influence how the supervisor frames and presents the data to the teacher.

Depending upon the goal of the observation, there may be prescribed ways of analyzing data. In supervising a teacher aiming for Madeline Hunter's (1982) version of effectiveness, Hunter recommends three points of analysis: 1) behaviors that contribute to learning; 2) behaviors that interfere with learning; and 3) behaviors that neither contribute nor interfere, but use time and energy that could be better spent. These analysis points call for identifying agreed-upon productive and nonproductive behaviors that the teacher has learned in a Hunter program.

Once the initial analysis is complete, the supervisor decides on one or two questions to raise or points to offer in the post-observation conference. The rest of the analysis takes place within the framework of the conference, when both teacher and supervisor review and respond to the data. It is also appropriate for the teacher to frame questions to raise or points to offer with respect to the lesson.

Post-observation conference

As soon after the classroom observation as possible, teacher and supervisor meet to discuss the initial analysis of the lesson and build insights from there. This conference is the heart of the clinical supervision process, for it is here that the teacher gains a perspective on teaching through dialogue and joint reflection that is otherwise unavailable. Most supervisors begin this conference with an open-ended question, "How do you think the lesson went?" This allows the teacher to take first responsibility for reflection and analysis. Most teachers will scrutinize their teaching extensively and have good suggestions for ways to improve their lessons. Some may even tell of adjustments they made during the class because an observer was there.

Following the teacher's remarks, the supervisor offers the data collected and asks for reactions to this information. When problems come up in the discussion, the supervisor typically seeks out the teacher's thoughts before prescribing solutions. Throughout the conference, teacher and supervisor exchange ideas, pose questions, and work toward action steps that will emphasize strengths and avoid weaknesses in the future. If the supervisor has applied good reflective interviewing strategies and listened well to the teacher's concerns, the resulting conference will be a mutual learning experience. The teacher will leave knowing the supervisor's analysis and recommendations for maintaining or improving instruction, and the supervisor will have a sense of the teacher's ability to direct his or her own improvement. More observation sessions may be called for, or they may decide to wait until a need arises for another observation cycle.

Analysis of the supervisory process

A final step in the clinical supervision process is evaluating the quality of the interaction itself and making decisions about next steps to take with the supervisor and teacher. Sometimes the teacher and supervisor fold the evaluation into the post-observation conference, simply stating how helpful the process has been. Other times, the analysis occurs after the teacher returns to the classroom and has a chance to practice the behaviors or attitudes discussed during the conference. There may be a mismatch between supervisor and teacher, and the suggestions won't be workable for the teacher. If there are different formats or persons available for supervision, then the analysis could lead to a new set of players or strategies next time.

This cycle of planning, observation, analysis, and conferencing continues, building upon each successive experience. The process is dynamic, involving much give and take by teacher and supervisor. As long as mutual learning occurs, the relationship will be self-fueling; it is the nature of professional development that when participants are actively engaged, they keep each other growing.

Conditions Necessary for Success

The clinical approach demands large amounts of time. Supervisors must have and use the time necessary to give adequate attention to each step in the process. A single cycle is rarely enough interaction to improve complex teaching behaviors.

Those who will be responsible for clinical supervision processes need appropriate training and follow-up support to insure that the skills learned will be appropriately applied. Skills of communication, factual data gathering, and recognizing teaching patterns and teacher stages of development all need to be addressed in training. These are sensitive training areas and may not be easily acquired.

Since our knowledge of effective teaching continues to expand, supervisors and teachers need to continually reach out to the knowledge base for new answers and possibilities.

Participants must understand the goals and stages involved in clinical supervision if its full benefits are to be realized. This is a serious collaboration between teacher and supervisor that is facilitated by an open agenda and honest communication and incapacitated by distrust and suspicion.

Finally, participants must acknowledge the differences between supervision and evaluation. The principal purpose of clinical supervision is to improve instruction over time with the active involvement of teachers and supervisors and with mutual goals and procedures agreed upon. It is not a summative evaluation experience, where the supervisor judges performance and makes decisions about the teacher's status that are entered on a record.

Benefits

The benefits of clinical supervision include

- teacher involvement in a process that enables them to gain awareness of their classroom behavior, analyze and interpret that behavior, and go about improvements in a self-directed, constructive way;
- a sense of trust, understanding, and mutual benefits deriving from supervisory relations;
- constructive classroom observations that feed into collaborative decision making and a teaming of teacher and supervisor;
- collegial relationships based on shared concerns, vocabulary, and solutions for teaching; and
- improved self-analysis skills in those who participate in these reflective activities.

Commentary

Given the extensive time, training, and relationship requirements to carry out clinical supervision well, one might ask if this is a feasible option for developing most teachers. Some administrators say yes and structure ways for all staff to engage in clinical supervision. It may require broadening the supervisory staff or extending the time frame for supervision so that some teachers undergo cycles one year, while others wait a year to participate. Or, it might necessitate different levels of supervision for teachers at different stages of development.

Glatthorn (1984) maintains that the two groups who most need to be considered for clinical supervision are inexperienced teachers and experienced teachers who are having difficulty in the classroom. These groups are more likely to be stymied by the challenges of the present and unable to take a longer view of their teaching potential. They may be swamped by classroom management concerns and unable to focus on the quality of their questions or the appropriateness of the lessons they have planned. Supervisors who have become experts in grouping and managing students and setting up engaging learning activities may have answers to questions these troubled teachers cannot think to ask.

Another question that must be addressed concerns who should do the supervising in a clinical supervision program. Administrators have historically been the individuals within a school/district to assume responsibility for all supervision. Closely tied to this responsibility, and in fact synonymous with it, is the responsibility for evaluation. Herein lies a source of conflict.

There is general agreement in the field of supervision that evaluators should not supervise. Because effective clinical supervision is dependent upon open, honest communication between teacher and supervisor, the tension that often results when supervisor and evaluator are one and the same person becomes a roadblock to realizing the full potential of a clinical supervision strategy.

So, if administrators shouldn't, who should? Glatthorn (1984) offers some options, one of which is to designate individuals who are responsible for supervision only. These individuals do not evaluate and, consequently, are less likely to engender distrust. Teachers who are recognized for their effectiveness and who have gained the respect and trust of their colleagues are often quite effective in this role. Another option is to assign all supervisory responsibilities to one administrator, while placing responsibility for evaluation upon another administrator.

The important thing to remember, regardless of who is assigned the responsibility, is that the person who performs the role of clinical supervisor needs training and support in that role. Just as teachers who are trying to strengthen a new skill need feedback and coaching, those individuals who have made a commitment to this way of supervising also need support and encouragement.

Another issue is whether to begin with volunteers, both in the ranks of supervisors and teachers, or attempt to involve everyone at once. There appear to be advantages and disadvantages to both approaches, but, especially for a fledgling staff development program, it may be best to go with volunteers first, choosing individuals who will bring with them interest and enthusiasm and constitute a strong nucleus. To impose clinical supervision upon everyone in the beginning, even though this may be the eventual goal in the school/district, is risky and doesn't allow the necessary focus on getting the program up and running.

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Peer Coaching

Teachers in a junior high school open the year with a memo from their principal reminding them of the district's commitment to a mastery learning instructional model. They are to design lessons that will engage students in higher levels of thinking and check for understanding and application of concepts within their subject area and in other contexts. The teachers have received training in components of this model but have had no opportunity to observe each other following the design with students. The principal would like to see his teachers use this instructional model but wants to allow the teachers time to observe and coach each other.

In an initial staff meeting, the principal introduces the idea of establishing a building-based instructional support team to coach teachers on various aspects of effective instruction. He offers training to those wishing to be coaches and time to work with colleagues on teaching problems. He explains that peer coaching will require skill in a number of areas: interpersonal communication, observation, factual data gathering, and planning for change; he expects to see these skills develop through training and practice with peer coaching.

The teachers are a mature, fairly collegial group. They do not formally team teach, but they often share teaching strategies and discuss classroom management issues at lunch or in workshops. These teachers have never been required to observe each other's classes or engage in any peer support activities, so their interactions are informal and spontaneous. The idea of forming an instructional support team sounds interesting to six teachers in this first meeting. They become the pilot group who will undergo training and then practice observing and reflecting on each other's teaching. The principal offers to cover their classrooms while they complete some *practice cycles of observation and conferencing, and the group agrees to discuss their progress with peer coaching at a mid-year staff meeting. In the second half of the year, the pilot teachers will work with other teachers who wish to engage in a peer coaching experience. The following summer, more training will be offered in peer coaching, thus increasing the number of staff involved. The district evaluation process exists side by side with this instructional support strategy. No evaluators will be coaches, and no coaches will have responsibility for evaluation.*

The scenario above represents one constructive approach to the objective of improving instruction. In this case, the principal supports a peer coaching program as a vehicle for developing teachers' skills in a specific model of teaching. Thus the focus of coaching sessions will be *technical*, helping teachers transfer workshop learnings to their classrooms. Garmston (1987) points out that technical coaching enhances collegiality, creating occasions for professional dialogue and allowing teachers to develop a vocabulary about instruction. Joyce and Showers (1983) have promoted coaching as a means of insuring transfer of learning for years; and Shalaway (1985) has documented that to acquire even moderately difficult strategies, teachers may need 20 to 30 hours of instruction in theory, 15 to 20 demonstrations, and an additional 10 to 15 coaching sessions to apply what they have learned. Sparks (1986) adds that peer coaching during training can provide a powerful boost to learning sometimes yielding better results than trainer observation.

Garmston (1987) has described other purposes for coaching. *Collegial coaching* leads teachers to reflect together on more general issues of teaching and learning. For example, a teacher might think about students' decision-making roles in school or question the openness of communication in the classroom. Such dialogue makes teachers feel more professional and thoughtful in their work and improves the culture of the school merely by its occurrence. This kind of coaching may be called for when a teacher wants to get an objective reading on the tone or quality of the classroom; it's a device for watching oneself work and analyzing how well the class operates.

A third version of coaching is *challenge coaching*. This format helps teams of teachers solve problems they are experiencing in the classroom. If the problem centers around a student who requires nontraditional teaching methods, the teacher may invite a psychologist or parent to be part of the problem-solving team. The result of challenge coaching is a set of alternative strategies to use in the classroom, with support and feedback as one works through the problem.

Another twist on coaching, *peer partnering,* pairs teachers for long-term training programs such as Cooperative Learning and Hunter's ITIP (Instructional Theory into Practice). The pairs attend training together with the understanding that they'll be working together to apply their new learnings, with the result of producing more change in individuals, breaking down barriers, and promoting experimentation.

Regardless of the focus for peer coaching, teachers need training (or at least an orientation) to how they will work together, a purpose or focus for interaction, and administrative support for time to spend together. Peer coaching can greatly enhance overall school performance by establishing norms of collegiality, trust, and respect among peers. It broadens the experience base in a school and allows teachers to assume an instructional leadership and support role previously reserved for administrators.

Underlying Assumptions

Schools are places where teachers as well as students can learn from each other.

When teachers see themselves as learners, they understand better how their students learn.

Whenever a new skill is learned, a teacher needs support to incorporate it successfully into her or his repertoire. Teachers who are exposed to a new technique, who practice that technique, and then are observed and receive feedback, are more likely to use it than teachers who are not coached.

Norms of collegiality and cooperation strengthen schools.

In a report to the National Education Association, Bacharach (1986) concluded that schools that build and sustain a culture of cooperation, that encourage the sharing of job knowledge, are precisely those schools that stand out from others and do a particularly effective job of educating students.

Peer coaching is one of the most powerful helping relationships for teachers. Embedded in this approach is the belief that teachers are their own best resource. Furthermore, communities of teachers who continuously engage in the study of their craft help diminish the isolation that exists in many schools.

What It Looks Like in Practice

Peer coaching is a teacher-to-teacher interaction aimed at improving instruction. Because of its personal nature, a climate of trust needs to be established. Partners select each other and work on problems voluntarily; they cannot feel that their confidentiality will be breached. The primary purpose of peer coaching is instructional support, not evaluation; thus, peers are more appropriate partners than administrators in this professional growth scheme.

There are several entry points for peer coaching: a teacher might pose a problem to another teacher; a school might identify a program that requires new teaching skills; a principal could advocate an instructional effectiveness model, such as mastery learning; a department might reorganize students or areas of instruction; or the state could pass a mandate calling for changes in subject treatment or testing. All of these events could precipitate meetings between teachers to decide on a response. These meetings generally serve as preconferences to identify concerns and map strategies for working on the problem together.

Generally, once a concern has been identified, the peer, acting as coach, arranges a time to conduct an observation, gathers descriptive data, and confers with the teacher. The coach's role is that of a facilitator or supporter; he or she works with the teacher to focus on the concern, plan improvement strategies, and follow through in the classroom. A variety of observation instruments can be used, depending on the nature of the problem and the desire of the teacher being observed. Data gathering procedures include script taping, anecdotal record keeping, seating charts with codes, audiotaping, and videotaping. All data gathered becomes the property of the teacher observed.

Some peer coaching models offer training in interpersonal communication, factual data gathering techniques, and analysis of teaching. There are generic coaching programs, aimed at self-directed instructional improvement, and content-specific coaching models that reinforce aspects of a particular teaching strategy, e.g., techniques associated with Joyce and Weil's (1986) Models of Teaching or the TESA program (Teacher Expectations, Student Achievement).

There are many ways to schedule time for observation and conferencing; administrators may cover a class, teachers might meet over lunch to discuss the lesson, or an instructional supervisor might assist with coverage and scheduling. Sometimes teachers combine classes to free up a colleague for a coaching session, or a roving substitute can be assigned to the program a couple of days a month. Also, coaches do not have to be full-time, model teachers. An instructional support team might be comprised of guidance personnel, media specialists, department heads, assistant principals, or teachers released for coaching. Such a diverse group has the flexibility to be able to work with teachers on a wide range of concerns and will not be as constrained by schedules as one instructional supervisor might be.

It is critical that the coach not play the role of an evaluator during a coaching session. Showers (1985) notes that the norms of coaching and evaluation practice are antithetical and should be separated in our thinking as well as in practice. Because in most instances an administrator plays an evaluative role with teachers, peer coaching provides an alternative mechanism for instructional support in a school. Administrators may help a teacher set goals for improvement, but the work of refining instruction falls to teachers working with each other in peer coaching programs.

The National Staff Development Council (1985) suggests these ways to promote coaching:

- Build trust with teachers by allowing them to participate voluntarily in peer coaching and choose their own partners.
- Help teachers develop a common set of goals for instructional improvement and a common vocabulary for describing their classroom observations and conferences.
- Enlist the support of the principal for peer coaching activities; some districts might go so far as to use peer observation as a legitimate alternative to observation by the principal.
- Provide incentives for involving teachers in peer coaching; released time, stipends, high-quality training experiences, continuing credits, and positive reinforcement from colleagues are all motivators.

Other roles the administrator can play are scheduling time for coaching partners to work together, arranging class coverage during observations, and explaining to the public how this staff development approach helps teachers refine their skills. The administrator can benefit from training sessions in peer coaching, because they offer useful techniques for observing and conferring with teachers and provide a structure for working with a peer on his or her own growth and development.

Conditions Necessary for Success

Too often, the sociology of schools discourages teachers from asking for help or offering assistance to one another. Teachers work alone in their classrooms and sometimes feel that to seek advice from other teachers is to admit, at least to some degree, a lack of teaching competence. Schools must build a climate that supports collegiality and continuous growth, so that teachers will take the risk of being observed as well as coaching others.

Training is another important condition for peer coaching to succeed. Although on the surface it appears that observing someone teach is a simple, straightforward process, teachers who become involved with coaching are always surprised at how difficult it is to be objective when observing, recording impressions, and conferencing. Training in factual data gathering, constructive feedback, and analysis of teaching incidents helps teachers perform this instructional support role.

Administrators need to protect time for teachers to work together in schools and find ways to keep classes operating while teachers observe and confer with each other. Some schools release teachers from normal custodial duties so that they can coach each other, using aides to cover lunchroom or recess time.

Benefits

Teachers who go through formal peer coaching experiences can gain 1) a better understanding of the teaching/learning process; 2) self-analysis skills; 3) improved teaching performance; and 4) a more positive attitude toward instructional support. (These are documented outcomes from Resident Supervisory Support for Teachers, a validated coaching model.) Both the teacher and the coach learn from these interactions. Schools can develop staffs with skills in the analysis of teaching, a belief in the value of collegial growth, and a structure for supporting instruction in an ongoing way.

A trainer in peer coaching provided the following responses about peer coaching from a participant:

1. What was the most growth-producing aspect of peer coaching for you personally?

   As one of the "oldies but goodies" and soon to leave the classroom, how truly wondrous to have had the opportunity to end it all on such a high note. I've had to sharpen my skills, pay more attention to my techniques, check those lesson plans, and work harder to be a good educator. When a teacher has earned respect from his/her peers and can share concerns with fellow teachers; can sit and listen/watch/record in another classroom for a specific reason; and can truly affect the teaching of others, then one can smile a lot. I think I've learned to eliminate the trivial and focus on, "Am I doing what I say I am doing, and could I do it any better?"

2. How do you see the staff at your school benefiting from peer coaching?

   It's like measles—it's spreading and catching on. The more involved, the less threatening, the more productive; the more productive, the better educated our students will be. As a faculty, we seem to be more flexible, and perhaps more cooperative.

3. What is the major drawback of peer coaching?

   Taking time, stealing time, having time. In some ways, our educational system is similar to a Kentucky Derby—everything must happen within an assigned period. Teachers should have more control over their schedules so they can release themselves from this bind.

Commentary

Several issues are relevant when considering whether to introduce a peer coaching strategy into a school. The most important one is that it requires a firm belief in teachers helping teachers. For some, this focus on one-to-one interactions seems to obscure larger school or district concerns. There is also a potential danger that a teacher's coach may be the sole source of ideas for improvement, thus limiting the possibility for growth.

One counter to this particular concern is varying the focus for peer coaching from personal concerns to more programmatic concerns. Administrators can channel energy into following an instructional model, or implementing new curricula, or monitoring student progress.

Another issue is that the prevailing milieu of school argues against the large-scale implementation of peer coaching. Schools still make teachers independent, not team-oriented; competitive, not cooperative; and isolated, not interacting. It is hard for many teachers to expose themselves to criticism, even from their peers, when they have been placed in classrooms and left to fend for themselves for years.

Another particularly knotty issue, and one that arises often in thinking about teacher development, is the important separation of peer coaching from evaluation. If evaluation is indeed formative as well as summative, then the time and focus of a teacher's peer coaching experiences can indeed be seen as part of evaluation. The importance here is that the coach not be seen as someone making judgments about the teacher, i.e., as a summative evaluator. It is possible, however, for the focus of a coaching experience to be on areas that have been agreed upon by the teacher and his or her supervisor (e.g., a principal) as targets for strengthening. Peer coaching, like other strategies for teacher development, can be quite successful in developing those areas, and the teacher-coach relationship can offset some of the anxiety that evaluations can sometimes arouse.

One more note about peer coaching. An often forgotten resource—schools of education—can play important roles in preparing teachers who are advocates of peer coaching. In their training programs, teacher trainees can be taught to observe and coach each other. This not only inculcates the skills needed but goes far towards establishing a value for cooperation that can be carried with the certified teacher into the school setting.

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Advising Teachers

Advisor: I am a question-raiser, a person stretcher. I take a piece of time or an activity that has happened and look with the teacher at what came before, at what she had hoped would come out of it, and what did come out of it (Thomas, 1979).

It's fairly easy to walk in and tell someone what to do. It's not too difficult to listen to a problem and say what you would do. To listen to people and then help them think through what is the next best step for them, that is an extraordinarily demanding way to work (San José, 1979).

Advising teachers are those *lead teachers*, *staff development associates*, or *specialists* who work with teachers in schools on a continual basis, helping them refine techniques, build new curricula, or work out the implications of new research and development in the classroom. They have more expertise in an area than the teachers with whom they work. Generally, these people are released from some or all of their classroom responsibilities to assist other teachers. They serve as an alternative to the mass inservice model, offering personalized, nonevaluative support for the growth of individuals.

The advisor role originated in the 1970s in teachers' centers, where resource teachers helped workshop participants carry strategies back to their classrooms. Sometimes they were called *helping teachers* to eliminate the negative implications of experts with all the answers. As advisors worked with teachers of all ranks and experience, they helped break down the notion that only beginning teachers needed guidance in mastering the profession. Once again, we see the emergence of advisors in master or mentor teacher roles. The helping function remains, but new leadership possibilities are arising for many teachers to share their art and craft.

Purposes Served by Advisors

The purposes served by advisors are wide and varied, from refinement of technique to prevention of burnout. Thomas (1979) documented nine common purposes for instituting advising teachers in a school or district:

- to improve the quality of day-to-day teaching in the classroom;
- to help teachers select and adapt—rather than adopt—curricular materials and programs;
- to help teachers find and make use of resources;
- to reach teachers who need a different approach to their development than the conventional inservice format;
- to help teachers understand and articulate their needs;
- to establish a network of people who will give each other long-term support and help individuals avoid burnout;
- to be an ombudsman, helping teachers find creative ways not only to survive but to sustain their beliefs and improve school climate;
- to stimulate teachers' abilities to observe, reflect, draw conclusions, and value their own resourcefulness; and
- to study how children learn and contribute to knowledge and research on learning and teaching.

Underlying Assumptions

The art and craft of teaching evolves.

Developing teachers move along a spectrum from master of technique in the classroom, to designer of curriculum and staff development, to collaborator with administrators in school improvement planning, to educator of parents and community in the partnership of learning. There are almost always continuing teaching challenges for teachers.

Experience is not only a good teacher, but a vital element in discovering what works in education.

Through experience, teachers are able to experiment and evaluate the outcomes, adjust as they go, and establish credibility with those who look to them as masters in the profession.

The craft of teaching is best transmitted by teachers.

Advising teachers can be particularly effective working with their colleagues because they know more about the classroom culture and teachers' competencies than do external consultants or administrators who occasionally visit the classroom.

Distinguishing Characteristics

Advisory relationships are established to support an individual's needs and interests, and not primarily to prepare that individual for a change mandated from outside or above. This distinguishes advisors from change agents or supervisors who work with large numbers of teachers on general improvement efforts. Sometimes advisors help teachers implement a new program, but only at the level required by that individual. The individual's concerns drive the relationship.

Advising generally occurs in a long-term, continuous framework, rather than in occasional episodes.

What It Looks Like in Practice

In her extensive work with advising teachers in California, Thomas (1979) noted the following characteristics of advisors in action:

- Advisors schedule regular personal contacts with teachers.
- Advisors work alongside teachers in their classrooms, e.g., planning more effective room arrangements, helping with student record keeping, observing how individuals respond to curriculum units.
- Advisors and teachers hold follow-up conversations to analyze what's happening in the classroom.
- Advisors help identify, locate, or make instructional materials (this may be a pressing need for a teacher who has been involuntarily assigned to teach another grade level or subject area).
- The advisor might work with some students during class time so that teachers can try out new materials/approaches with another group of students.
- Advisors stimulate teachers to reflect on and analyze their teaching. This means talking with teachers about specific students and strategies; encouraging writing in journals; allowing the teacher to observe the advisor working with a class, to see the responses and mood of the class from a different angle.
- Advisors encourage teachers to experiment with new teaching materials and strategies and take risks necessary to change. They

might build confidence by starting with a teacher's strengths and progressing from strong to weaker points.

- Advisors may start out working in classrooms, then progress to meeting with teachers in group settings (study group, support group). The advisor might also help principals and other supervisors establish an advisory relationship with a group of teachers. This might be organized as a follow-up support group for implementing a specific program.
- When advisees no longer need help working with their students, they often become advisors to other teachers; these new advisors then need help in learning to work with adults and support for reaching out beyond the confines of their previous work.

The Academy for Educational Development (1985) suggests five roles for advisors that are differentiated by the kinds of assistance and support they provide teachers. They are: teacher-scholar of subject matter; teacher-scholar of child or adolescent development; teacher-experimenter in pedagogical tactics; teacher-translator of research; and teacher-counselor in pedagogy.

Conditions Necessary for Success

While advising teachers promise great support for individuals who might otherwise be lost in large-scale staff development plans, there are certain prerequisites to making the relationship productive. First, the teachers being advised must be aware of a need to develop or refine their teaching; they must be ready to take on new work and learning; and they must be willing to make a continuing commitment to professional growth. The school must show support for this individualized assistance by creating time for teachers to confer and work together, allowing advisors to play a specialized teacher support role, rather than giving them administrative responsibilities or using them as substitutes.

The school also needs to educate parents and the community to the role of advising teachers, letting them know that a teacher who is working under the guidance of an advisor is not a poor teacher and an advisor can have teaching responsibilities for adults as well as children. Finally, the school needs to be willing to evaluate a teacher's progress with an advisor over an extended time period. This is not a one-shot occasion for teacher development.

The advisor needs to have a composite of skills and experience that can be applied to the questions asked by colleagues. A general portrait of an advising teacher shows

- extensive classroom teaching experience;
- understanding adults' and children's learning styles and a talent for relating theory to practice;
- confidence, leadership, and credibility in working with adults;
- continuing involvement in their own learning, plus opportunities to reflect with others who serve as advisors;
- personal confidence and clarity about beliefs and values;
- ability to observe, record, and analyze what happens in a classroom;
- ability to recognize various stages of teacher development and offer appropriate support;
- ability to work comfortably with parents, administrators, and teachers on climate and student learning issues without giving up primary allegiance to helping teachers in areas they define themselves, i.e., being an advocate for teachers; and
- ability to work collaboratively with teachers (Thomas, 1979).

Not all advisors come equipped with these skills; special training and support can enhance these coaching relationships. In large districts, the staff development director often takes responsibility for training and nurturing a group of advising teachers who work in several schools.

The Advising Relationship

At the heart of a healthy relationship between teacher and advisor is talk about teaching. Three principles have been found to govern what Little (1984) calls *productive talk:*

- the existence of a common language for sharing ideas about teaching and learning;
- a limited focus on one or two key issues that can be absorbed within the confines of an interaction; and
- the use of hard evidence that makes the discussion concrete, relevant, and accessible to the partners.

Often, common language emerges from attending training sessions where teachers are given a vocabulary for instructional strategies, e.g., Madeline Hunter's Mastery Teaching mode. Such 'skills talk' serves well to begin discussions about classroom teaching but does not always cover the complexity of problems in the classroom. There are some times in the classroom when partners see incidents very differently or lack the vocabulary to turn vague perceptions into manageable thoughts.

Limiting focus refers not only to a manageable amount of change but also to goals worth working on together. Advisors say the focus should be something important, with a direct relation to learning; something complex enough to require two heads considering it; and something that can be reasonably changed by teachers, working alone or with others.

Hard evidence results from well-designed observation tools or videotapes, when they are available. Though teachers may be uncomfortable with videotaping initially, they usually come to appreciate the value of the specificity and completeness of a videotaped observation session. Videotapes allow the teacher and advisor to see incidents holistically and often stimulate questions and remarks that transcend the boundaries of preplanned observation points. They may capture a tone or feeling in the class that justifies the teacher's choices during the period.

Most people who have served in advisory roles emphasize the collegial (equal) relationship with other teachers and shy away from evaluating, judging, giving expertise. They like to think of themselves as mutual problem solvers, facilitators, observers, and recorders of classroom incidents. Teachers, on the other hand, may desire advisors to take initiative and give advice, assess classroom performance, or offer ideas about other approaches to students. Little (1984) points out that in cases where the advisor's title offers no special status with teachers, then the "language of facilitation will prevail." When the expert standing of advisors is accepted by teachers, we will more often see leadership and initiative displayed in matters of instructional improvement.

Whatever the chosen relationship, when teachers and advisors work well together, they earn each other's trust. This trust emerges from the quality of interactions, the safety and predictability of the topics, methods and criteria used during their sessions, and the reciprocity or acknowledgment of contributions being made by both partners.

Commentary

The advising teacher of the 70s is becoming the master or mentor teacher of the 80s. In places where 'master teacher' is a controversial delineation, 'advising' or 'helping' teachers might be more accepted. Any teacher in a leadership role faces the problem of gaining support and recognition from colleagues. Teachers as a group prefer democratic organization. They resist setting themselves above their peers, even when they have more extensive experience or knowledge than others. Any school system institutionalizing a role for advising teachers needs to open that position to teachers who qualify and not misuse the position to carry out administrative tasks or substitute for teachers who are absent.

Whether advisors work out of professional development centers, function as part of a school improvement team, or simply act as a leader among colleagues will be determined locally. The need for support persons for individuals seeking to improve their skills or status in the profession is upon us by trend and by mandate; more than ever, local schools are finding that they need to prepare and renew their teachers on the job.

The success of master or mentor plans depends largely on the ability of persons to work well with each other on problems of teaching and learning. As Judith Warren Little (1984) states, they must "come close to the classroom without coming close to the bone." There are several challenges to gaining acceptance for advising teachers. First, advisors have to succeed case by case with individual teachers; second, they must gain acceptance for operating in the framework of the school; third, they must be established as a group of trusted colleagues who have earned the rank of master and not an elite set of administrator favorites; fourth, their professional development role must be understood by parents and community members who might believe that these teachers are not doing the job they are "supposed to do."

Teacher helpers are not part of the established tradition of teaching; historically, teachers have relied on individual judgment and independent accomplishments in the classroom. However, the advising relationship promises ongoing support for people entering the profession, renewal for more experienced teachers, and a vehicle for incorporating teachers' views into general school improvement planning. The reciprocity between developing teachers and developing schools plays out nicely in places where teachers enact instructional leadership through advisory roles.

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Mentoring Beginning Teachers

As a novice teacher, I did not always know how to convert good intentions and enthusiasm into effective educational teaching. Fortunately, an experienced teacher acted as my guide and mentor.

—Mentor Teacher

After so many years, it is refreshing to have ongoing communication with someone who comes to the profession filled with enthusiasm and fresh ideas.

—Mentor Teacher

Apprenticeships, or induction periods, have long existed in many professions. Even in the teaching profession, mentoring has occurred on an unofficial basis. One can find isolated cases of teachers who were fortunate enough to have a positive mentoring experience during their formative years. These teachers look at that experience as having played a significant role in their growth as professionals. But these individuals were the exception, not the rule. Dan Lortie observes that it is while serving as a resident, clerk, or associate that a young doctor, lawyer, or architect learns the actual skills of his or her profession—the implementation of ideas and techniques studied in the university. "He learns to use those skills under the watchful eyes of seasoned men [and one would add, women] who have developed some balance between theory and practice, men familiar with the ways in which reality demands reformulation of general principles (Lortie, 1966, p. 62)."

Traditionally, in the isolated environment of the teaching profession, there have been no watchful eyes of seasoned women and men to direct the learning of the beginner. Instead, much of the influence experienced teachers have had on the neophyte has been informal and much of what the beginner learned was learned without asking. The general consensus is that the beginning teacher learns how to teach during the first year largely alone through trial and error and in the isolation of the classroom.

This is changing. As more serious consideration is given to the need for an induction period for beginning teachers, the role of mentor teacher is gaining recognition.

A mentor, by common definition, is an experienced adult who befriends and guides a less experienced adult. In doing so, mentors can serve many roles: teacher, coach, role model, developer of talent, sponsor, protector, opener of doors. Ideally, the term mentor is reserved for the person who serves in many of these roles.

Underlying Assumptions

Induction into the teaching profession is a unique period, quite possibly the most difficult phase of a teaching career.

Because teaching is one of the few professions with no formal apprenticeship, the first-year teacher is virtually thrust into a classroom situation with only a brief stint at student teaching and his or her own schooling experience upon which to draw. Left to flounder alone during this difficult phase of a teaching career, the neophyte often experiences confusion, self-doubt, and anxiety—all roadblocks to growth.

Newcomers to the teaching profession need support and encouragement. They need to know that teaching is never problem-free and that the beginning is uniquely challenging. They need to know that others have experienced the problems they now face, and they need assistance to see that the problems become variables related to growth and not obstacles leading to withdrawal from the profession.

Beginning teachers come into the profession with many advantages that, if nurtured and channeled properly, can add positively to a school.

Coming fresh from preservice training, beginning teachers have often been exposed to the latest ideas in subject-matter pedagogy and effective teaching research. They are usually enthusiastic, energetic, idealistic, and determined to do the best they can; and they are ready to channel this energy and commitment into their work. What all too often happens, however, is that when faced with the kaleidoscope of challenges and demands of the first year(s), they soon begin to experience doubts, frustrations and anxieties that block chances for growth and creativity. The guidance of a mentor can significantly increase the likelihood that the beginning teacher will see these challenges and demands as opportunities for growth.

Those who are new to the profession can benefit from the support and expertise of skilled, experienced practitioners.

The teaching profession is strengthened by the vast numbers of dedicated, talented teachers who are skilled in both the art and science of teaching. These experienced teachers offer many benefits to the beginner. They have wisdom, insights, and practical knowledge that can both promote and enhance the professional development of the new teacher.

What It Looks Like in Practice

The mentor-beginning teacher relationship encompasses two critical dimensions: support and intensive clinical supervision. It is when time and attention are given to both of these dimensions that the fullest benefits of the relationship can be realized.

However, even under the most conducive circumstances, mentoring is a complex relationship. A mentor must willingly make a commitment to invest the time and effort necessary to help the young professional enter teaching. A mentor must have the ability to put theory into practice; to cope with day-to-day issues but also maintain a broad view of the total picture, often seeing an issue from different points of view. Likewise, mentors need the ability to be reflective about their own teaching: to identify their "theories-in-use." A mentor must know when the time is right to encourage the new teacher to venture out and try new ideas and strategies for handling situations; such a mentor will create an atmosphere in which it is safe to do so. Beginning teachers often have difficulty articulating their needs because they are so immediately and personally involved in them. The mentor must be able to perceive needs and articulate for the beginner when necessary.

Ideally, the mentor and the beginning teacher meet prior to the first day of school. Experienced teachers know how critical these beginning days are for setting the tone that will prevail in the classroom. By providing the opportunity for the two to begin to meet before opening day, the mentor can assist the beginning teacher in attending to those organizational issues that facilitate a productive beginning of the school year. These include room arrangement, clearly defined rules and consequences for misbehavior, adequate supplies and textbooks, etc.

In the days and weeks that follow, beginning teacher and mentor continue to meet both formally and informally. The informal meetings occur before school, between classes, after school—whenever the two can find some moments together. A myriad of issues can be focused upon during these meetings, including:

- The mentor checks to see if the beginning teacher understands the process for completing report cards.
- The beginning teacher is experiencing anxieties about the upcoming Back-to-School Night and shares these anxieties with the mentor.
- The mentor stops in to ask if a parent conference the previous afternoon went as well as the beginning teacher had hoped it would.
- The beginning teacher has a serious discipline problem with a student and wants to talk about it.

On a more formal basis, when at all possible, mentor and beginning teacher have a minimum of one period of time a week when they spend time in one another's classroom. Initially, it is the mentor who observes the beginning teacher and who provides the feedback that serves as a catalyst for a dialogue between the two. This time for dialogue about what happened during the lesson that promoted or interfered with learning, and what implications this has for future lessons, is a key factor in training the beginner to "think the way a good teacher thinks."

Eventually, it is desirable for the beginning teacher to take a turn at being the observer and the initial giver of feedback, for this adds another dimension to the process of learning to think the way a good teacher thinks. Videotaping mentor lessons can provide a helpful tool for discussion.

No mentoring relationship lasts forever. In the case of the mentor-beginning teacher relationship, the end of the first year usually sees the end of the formal relationship between them. The effects of such a relationship, however, live on, for both individuals are enriched by the experience. They are enriched with newly acquired or sharpened skills and with a mental framework that sees professional growth through collegial interaction as a normal part of a teacher's professional life.

Conditions Necessary for Success

- Beginning teachers and mentors must have time built into their schedules to allow them to observe one another teaching and to confer with one another following each observation.

- Systematic procedures for selecting experienced teachers to serve as mentors must be founded upon the highest standards and must be clearly articulated and adhered to. This insures that those teachers chosen to serve as mentors are skilled in the art and science of teaching and possess strong interpersonal skills.
- Those experienced teachers who are chosen to serve as mentors need training to prepare them to effectively carry out the responsibilities of the role. This training should include skills in clinical supervision, knowledge of effective teaching research, and an understanding of the principles of adult learning.
- There should be ongoing support from building administrators who have a role to play in the development of the new professional.
- Mentor and beginning teacher should be located in the same building and, unless it is absolutely impossible, teach the same subject or grade level.

Benefits

The benefits of a mentoring program rest not only with the beginning teacher. It can be assumed that mentors, by the very fact that they are selected to serve in the role, have achieved a high level of skill in the art and science of teaching. What often happens, however, is that as those skills strengthen they become second nature and move to an unconscious level. They become more and more instinctive, and we don't consciously think about those things we do instinctively.

However, the mentor, now in a relationship in which he or she must articulate for another, must bring to a renewed level of awareness those effective teaching skills. Doing this encourages the experienced teacher to reexamine his or her own beliefs about teaching and to reassess his or her own teaching behavior. This reexamination and reassessment, combined with the exposure to new ideas in subject matter pedagogy and effective teaching research often brought by the beginning teacher, stimulates professional growth on the part of the mentor as well.

Students and other colleagues also benefit from a successful induction period for the beginner. As noted by Houston and Felder, "A floundering first year teacher cannot provide a high-quality educational program for students. When a teacher becomes frustrated, anxiety-ridden, and exhausted, the students and the entire profession suffer (in Adams, 1982)."

The profession will also benefit. Commitment to an induction period is seen by many as a means of reducing the high attrition rate of individuals in their first three years of teaching.

Commentary

Believing in the importance of mentoring for beginning teachers and deciding to institute the practice within a school community are important first steps toward implementing this practice. But unresolved issues remain that require thoughtful consideration prior to making a final decision to adopt the practice.

- What criteria are most indicative of individuals who will make good mentors, and what is the best process for selecting them?
- How can we monitor to assess that the mentor is indeed guiding in a way that contributes to the beginning teacher's growth?
- How will we insure that mentor and beginning teachers have time to observe one another teach and follow such observation with discussion?
- What are the responsibilities of the beginning teacher in the relationship?

These unresolved issues, however, should not be seen as insurmountable obstacles to implementation. As a profession, we know a great deal about what makes for effective teaching, and it is time we share this knowledge clearly and directly with those who are joining our ranks. The experiences teachers have during their beginning years have consequences for the kind of teachers they will become. Those experienced in the profession must do everything possible to see that beginners meet with far more success than failure. Survival alone is not an acceptable goal of the induction year(s).

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Teachers' Centers

Teacher development activities in Bridgeport (CT) are coordinated through a professional development center. The facility, which takes up six rooms in a curriculum center, is designed to provide educators with a variety of programs and materials for personal and professional growth. All programs are planned by the educators involved, and a full-time director coordinates delivery of services.

New York City teachers may turn to a teacher center in their building to enhance their skills. The New York Teacher Center Consortium, a United Federation of Teachers' Project, collaborates with the Board of Education and the community school districts to make teacher-directed inservice possible. Centers are located in schools and run by teacher specialists who are selected based on their understanding of teaching and learning, their ability to assess needs, and their ability to work well with their peers. A variety of techniques are used in the centers, including consultation, demonstration, modeling, training, and coaching. Teacher specialists receive ongoing training in new research findings, staff development approaches, and classroom management techniques. The centers offer outreach programs through after-school courses and workshops.

In Pittsburgh, the Schenley High School Teacher Center serves the staff development needs of all secondary schools in the Pittsburgh Public School system. Each quarter, 48 teachers from all high schools in the district take part in a full-time, eight-week course of study at Schenley, a comprehensive, integrated high school for more than 1,000 students. The objectives for the Center experience are

- *to refine and expand teachers' instructional skills;*

- *to update teachers' knowledge in their specific content areas;*
- *to increase teachers' sensitivity to adolescents;*
- *to provide teachers with the opportunity for personal and professional enrichment;*
- *to apprise teachers of districtwide initiatives; and*
- *to enable teachers to follow through on individual and interactive plans for continued professional growth.*

Each visiting teacher goes through a three-phase process: orientation and self-assessment, direct involvement, and follow through. Orientation and self-assessment occur at the visiting teacher's home school, with the help of a Teacher Center staff member and a diagnostic summary sheet designed to communicate the specific needs of the teacher. Together, the teacher and staff person write an eight-week development plan. While at Schenley, the teacher becomes involved in seminars, skill sessions, and personal enrichment activities related to the broad goals of the program and the specific needs of the teacher. At the end of the eight-week experience, teachers review their goals and prepare for follow through. At the home school, each returning teacher must participate in or conduct seminars, observe other teachers and give them feedback, and work on his or her individual plan.

Teachers and students praise the development of Schenley High School into a learning-oriented environment, one that promotes achievement of teachers and students alike. Resident teachers indicate a greater awareness of themselves as professionals and a renewed commitment to teaching; visiting teachers say they experience increased effectiveness in instruction, a better understanding of the adolescent, and a deeper awareness of the district's expectations for instruction. The Schenley experience demonstrates that teachers teaching teachers is a powerful concept and resource for improvement of secondary education.

Teachers' centers are professional development structures operating within a school or district, or between collaborating organizations such as schools, colleges, teachers' associations, and businesses. While no two teachers' centers look alike, they share certain purposes: they respond to teachers' continuing learning needs, as determined by the teacher; they provide an environment where teachers can work individually or in groups on developing classroom materials and projects; and they advise and assist teachers in their own improvement in a nonevaluative, supportive situation.

The official origin of teachers' centers in this country goes back to 1976 when federal funding was authorized for three years to create teachers' centers. These centers were defined in Public Law 94-482 as "local school-district sponsored sites where working teachers could pursue professional improvement directly related to their own classrooms, and where the improvement program would be overseen by a policy board composed of teachers in the majority, with help from administrators, professors, and the school board." For many years before the funding authorization, teachers' centers had been springing up in small, informal structures. Sometimes these centers were independent work areas where teachers came to exchange ideas, and sometimes they were sponsored by colleges and districts. The centers were characterized more by their staff than their location or sponsorship. They employed advisors or resource teachers who worked in a nonsupervisory manner with teachers on curriculum development and instructional techniques.

Teachers' centers can be distinguished from other inservice delivery structures by their emphasis on individual concerns, their use of teachers as decision-makers, their pragmatism, and their accessibility. They answer teachers' needs for local, practical, solutions to everyday teaching challenges and provide continuity of assistance in space and time.

Assumptions

Teacher-determined content and delivery is an important feature of effective professional growth.

Teachers know their own needs and are in the best position to represent the needs of their students. Teachers' Centers are designed to be responsive to those needs. A focus on application of research, teaching strategies, and materials for instruction makes the teacher center an on-the-job training center for people who want to refine how they are educating students. Teachers are collaborators rather than targets for development in these centers. Their spirit is captured in this quote:

> If I am, in fact, going to select appropriate pieces of curriculum to fit my own students, my basic need is to have a variety of resource people whose practical experience I can respect, and the ability to use one of the people not in a one-shot workshop, but over time, in as much depth as I am ready for. It takes more than two days or a weekend or a month to put together curriculum. You have to use

> resources, reflect upon what happens then with kids, and go back and revamp what you're doing (Devaney, 1977, p. 20).

Key Features

The teachers' centers we have described share some common characteristics:

- a central location where teachers meet, plan, and implement new educational practices;
- a variety of training activities conducted by resident and/or external staff;
- materials for personal and professional growth;
- focused resources relating to teachers' specified needs, e.g., research on serving special needs students, materials related to effective teaching; and
- organizational arrangements allowing for teacher development to take place within a school context, e.g., coaching sessions based on classroom observation, after-school workshops, inservice activities.

Teachers' centers are characterized by their warmth, concreteness, connection, and time for reflection. They are places where teachers voluntarily come out of isolation and gain companionship and support. Centers offer concrete curriculum materials that connect with students' interests and needs. They engage teachers in curriculum development at the level they desire, allowing them to select experiences that build either awareness in a subject or competence. Finally, they give teachers the time to reflect on students' needs, subject-matter content, and their teaching style.

Teachers' centers are unique among staff development structures. The best ones:

- avoid bureaucratic or hierarchical structures so they can be fast and flexible in responding to teachers' ongoing needs;
- have a small, flexible staff that is well connected to teachers; they are always looking for talent as well as deficiencies, resources within and without, and opportunities to craft solutions to local problems;
- are defined in terms of what participants give as well as take; for example, teachers' time is given freely, while they also get released time during the school day; they provide voluntary advice to colleagues, as well as compensation for workshops; and

- are evaluated in terms consistent with the goals of the center; that is, if a goal is to engage teachers in reflection about teaching, then the gains will not be seen immediately—they will emerge gradually as teachers practice changes in their classrooms. Counting contact hours with teachers is not as accurate a measure as observing or reflecting on classroom behavioral changes and their effects on students (Devaney, 1977).

Teachers' centers have served multiple purposes since their inception, ranging from providing practical inservice, to helping parents participate in classrooms, to allowing college of education faculty to cooperate with practicing teachers in the revision of teacher preparation requirements. They have historically done best focusing people on selected tasks in time. The role of the teacher consultant or advisor emerging from a teacher center model provides new opportunities for professional development. Teachers as instructional leaders, peer coaches, and resident mentors for interns are changing the way schools are organized and teacher education carried out.

Teachers' centers are resurfacing as local staff development structures. New York, for example, funds 75 teachers' centers throughout the state. Rather than sending teachers to universities for inservice courses, teachers' centers allow more training to take place in local settings. They can serve as local laboratories for inducting teachers into the profession. They may offer demonstrations of model programs, 'make and take' sessions for curriculum materials, and opportunities for teachers to practice and observe each other trying new strategies.

Funding for these *teacher development centers*, a label often used at the present time, may come from a variety of sources: local, state, and national. The focus of the center will be determined largely by the sponsor. A private business could support a technology center where teachers learn to integrate computers into educational settings. A state department of education might fund a center dedicated to improving ways of team teaching at the middle school level; or a university might cosponsor a teacher induction center in a local district where student teachers could serve an internship under the joint guidance of university and local supervising teachers.

Conditions Necessary for Success

As free-standing organizations, teachers' centers require staff, materials, and coordination with district objectives for instruction. Most of our examples have a director or coordinator of services, part-time or full-time teacher consultants, resource libraries, and a flexible set of offerings that respond to the emerging needs of teachers. Teachers' center directors generally need expertise in research or resource identification, planning, and coordination of activities, both within the center and beyond to districts. Teacher consultants must be able to secure or develop teaching materials, provide individualized professional development, and conduct workshops on topics of concern to teachers and school districts. Basic skills in communication, needs assessment, coaching, demonstration, observation, and analysis of teaching are common to teacher consultants working in teachers' centers.

Benefits

When a teachers' center has an established place in the organization, a supportive interactive operating style, and a critical mass of teachers involved, certain outcomes can be expected:

1. Teachers will invest themselves in new ideals and effort in return for receiving nonjudgmental, practical, but thought-provoking help from colleagues.
2. Teachers can tailor and expand the curriculum for their own classroom and students, using resources that go beyond traditional texts and worksheets.
3. Teachers can be refreshed and sustained by constructive work with advisors and resource teachers. These are master teachers whom the teacher invites to problem-solve, bring new ideas, demonstrate alternative teaching strategies, and provoke and extend the teacher's thought.
4. Instructional improvement can be planned collaboratively, with teachers developing ideas alongside principals, supervisors, and parents, in a nonjudgmental environment (Devaney, 1977).

Commentary

Teachers' centers have changed since what seems to have been their heyday—the 1970s. Some believe that there was a missing ingredient in many original center programs: a critical mass of teachers engaged at any given time in a home setting—their school or district. While it is advantageous to have centers operating in external or neutral settings, safe from the evaluator's eye, the loss of administrative support for teacher development in these centers may have been the price that was paid for the distance. Today's teachers' centers have learned from the past. They know that if they are to make a difference, they need to be recognized as part of the general improvement structure of the schools and district. Teachers' center coordinators or resource staff more and more connect with principals, instructional supervisors, and district-sponsored improvement activities, so that the support they offer teachers is integrated with problems and solutions occurring in their school or district. The "new look" in teachers' centers makes them viable approaches to meeting the development needs of teachers today.

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Teacher Institutes

> *Before I got there, I didn't know if I'd want to stay all week—summers are very precious. I also wasn't sure I really wanted to spend that much time on one topic. Yet this was the best professional experience I've ever had. It was the only time I felt like teaching was regarded as a true profession, where teachers really learn theory in depth and apply it to what we do in the classroom. I felt intellectually stimulated, and that was very energizing.*
>
> *—Veteran Elementary Teacher*

> *It was great to learn in a relaxed atmosphere where we could really pursue things with other teachers and the consultants. The opportunity to interact with colleagues in depth, away from school and home, was very beneficial. I made many good friends (and had fun, too).*
>
> *—High School English Teacher*

Teacher institutes are intensive learning experiences that typically serve the purposes of substantive content and professional renewal. They may present new ways of thinking about school subjects or alternate methods of engaging students in learning. Whatever the emphasis, it is the intensity of study that most characterizes the institute as a professional development option. They offer focused, continuous investigation of topics or themes that cannot be explored in occasional workshops. Frequently, institutes run from one week to three weeks, providing time for reflection and assimilation of information in a setting conducive to collegial learning. Institutes feature time, space, and support for teachers who want to explore new frameworks for thinking about their jobs and are willing to dedicate the time and effort required to change.

Underlying Assumptions

Learning (or unlearning) complex teaching behavior requires extended time and intensity of effort.

Organizers of institutes understand that learning new approaches to teaching requires fairly extensive time to break old habits and assumptions and make room for new concepts and behaviors. It is difficult to find time to consider alternatives, try them on for size, and evaluate their usefulness within the normal context of the school day or year. Teachers have little time for planning within the school day, and almost no occasion to run ideas past colleagues in the school setting. Most teachers work on their toes, responding to pressing demands of students and trying to cover curriculum objectives that loom before them. Finding time to "dance" with topics, making sure the presentation is rich and the response rewarding, is a rare experience for most teachers.

Teachers need time away from teaching responsibilities to consider complex changes in attitude or behavior. This concentrated time is what most institutes offer.

For teachers to take on substantive change in beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors, they must be given a modified context where they can be learners first, teachers second.

For the teacher to put his or her learning ahead of students' learning requires freedom from the ordinary context for teaching. In order to focus on oneself as thinker, adapter, creative individual, there needs to be space to open up one's sense of self and what one knows or wants to know. This space may be in a school, but not in a setting where the teacher is accommodating students one hour and trying to develop a sense of personal potential the next. Teachers usually do not question their own tactics or motives; most find a comfortable set of goals and strategies that work in the classroom, and they go about the business of educating smoothly and predictably. When an individual or a district challenges their assumptions, teachers need to escape the rituals and experiment with new formats, new positions in the classroom. A fresh context helps people play with alternatives. Institutes try to accommodate this need for a new perspective on the role of teaching.

A powerful way of refining or stretching a teacher's capacity is to join that person with a community of learners who are also striving for improvement or new energy in their work.

Teaching can be an isolated art, but when one wants to refine or stretch beyond one's own vision of what's possible, collegial support is key. Institutes join participants in learning tasks and celebrations. They build on the adult learning need to discuss and reflect on change with respected peers. They also allow time to practice in a laboratory setting and receive feedback from peers who are also striving to adopt new practices. Sometimes, the institute becomes a community of learners, residing together, working twelve-hour days, and feeling the reward of continuous pursuit of knowledge. It is not uncommon for this community to extend beyond the initial event into formal or informal follow-up sessions among participants. The bonds established in institutes can be so strong that individuals have only to see another participant later in the year and the thoughts and convictions of the institute return.

Intensive learning experiences can have a transforming effect on the learners, serving to significantly revitalize intellectual inquiry and commitment to one's work.

The example of the Community of Learners Humanities Program (below) illustrates how an entire staff was revitalized through a challenging set of inquiry experiences.

What They Look Like in Practice

The Community of Learners Humanities Program, Portland, Maine
This program, funded by grants from the Maine Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities, was designed by teachers in Portland's Public Schools and professors teaching the humanities at the University of Southern Maine. The program is based on the beliefs that teaching improves as teachers stretch their horizons and that all high school teachers would benefit from extended study and discussion of important texts in the humanities, arts, and sciences. High school students will then benefit directly as they are taught by classroom teachers who have developed a strengthened understanding of the humanities and a deeper commitment to the disciplines within them.

The project resulted from Portland high school teacher recommendations on ways to strengthen the teaching of humanities. Evolving from discussion about the development of such a humanities program was a consensus that in addition to the scholarly learning there would be other benefits. Teachers would profit from sharing ideas with other faculty members; discussion and implementation of more work across disciplines; alleviation of the feeling of isolation that pervades schools where very demanding schedules preclude teachers meeting on common discussion grounds; and opportunity to see one's own discipline in a larger context.

All of Portland's 152 high school teachers participated in this shared learning experience. Following an introductory meeting, each teacher selected one of six study groups. These study groups of 25 to 30 teachers spent four half-days with university mentors and guest lecturers discussing texts, works of art, films, or music centering on one of six topics. Each seminar section was led by a university mentor and a high school mentor who shared responsibility for their group during the half-days and throughout the school year.

Seminar topics included:

- Chariots of Fire: Sports as a Reflection of Society
- Two Cities in Transition: Vienna and Portland, 1880-1914
- The Romance and the Reality of War
- 1984—George Orwell's Vision, Today's Reality, and the Future
- New England Whaling: A Paradigm of Man and Nature, Commerce and Art
- From Medieval to Renaissance: Key Themes in European Culture, 1300-1600

Seminars included required readings, films, slides, lectures, and discussion. Participants prepared lectures on each seminar topic and offered them to the public, thus inviting the community into this unique learning circle.

The Project for Development of Instructional Support Teams
This project uses a three-week summer institute at the University of Southern Maine to develop instructional support teams of four teachers and administrators from participating schools/districts. In Maine, as in other states undergoing reform, standards for certifying and renewing teachers are being upgraded. One vehicle supporting teacher induction and renewal is the local instructional support team. This group of advising teachers and administrators helps new teachers and experienced teachers refine their performance. The instructional support team is a relatively new structure in schools, requiring new roles and skills in demonstrating teaching approaches and observing and coaching colleagues. The Project for the Development of Instructional Support Teams offers experience in these areas.

The first week of the institute focuses on Models of Teaching (Joyce & Weil, 1986). Participants learn about various models of teaching and practice using them with their teammates.

The second week of the institute presents ways of observing and coaching to the instructional support teams. This strand helps participants coach each other through the Models of Teaching they are learning and gives tips about observation that can be applied to any improvement effort.

The third week of the institute connects participants by teaching model rather than by district and allows them the time to develop presentations for others on the model they have learned.

Follow-up typically occurs in two day-long sessions scheduled during the school year. At this time, experts in Models of Teaching and coaching programs are brought in and participants get a chance to refine and enhance what they have learned. Since institute participants come in local teams, when they leave they have their own built-in support structure. They are a community of learners, committed to carrying out the instructional support roles assigned them by their districts.

The National Writing Project

The National Writing Project has spawned affiliate projects in most parts of the country dedicated to examining a process approach to teaching writing. A common feature of all Writing Project models is the three-week summer institute. These institutes involve participants in research, teaching strategies, and demonstrations of lessons connected with phases of writing development—prewriting, writing, revising, and publishing. Because they challenge teachers to investigate, apply, and validate the effectiveness of writing strategies, the involvement is extensive. Participants take on a research project, develop two publishable pieces of writing, and design a demonstration lesson for other teachers during the three weeks. The days are divided among research-into-practice sessions and reading-writing groups for the development of the finished pieces of writing. Participants assume both teaching and learning roles, building from a research base and an experience base with writing. For many, this is the first time they have had to write and produce in the same manner as their students. Teachers learn what hard work writing is and what rewards can be gained from having a peer group that responds to and helps develop one's work.

Institutes are usually held on university campuses and involve presentations by experts in the field of writing. Days typically run from 8:00 to 4:00, but the research, writing, and demonstration work extends well into the night for most. Some participants take up residence during these institutes; the others must block their personal time at home so they can accomplish the multiple demands of the institute. While the goals of the institute are intense, so is the satisfaction of delving into content and methodology for teachers. This total immersion in development yields changes in teacher attitudes and beliefs not normally experienced in staff development activities.

Summer institute participants are encouraged to return to their schools and demonstrate their learnings to colleagues. If participants attend in teams, they often continue a reading-writing group back home. Most teachers find their own experiences with writing to be a powerful determinant of what will work with students. They want to continue writing to see what other mysteries unfold in the process. Also, many participants discover that the writing they've done all their lives has not been very meaningful and embark on nonexpository forms to express thoughts and feelings never "published" before.

Between demonstrating writing lessons, participating in reading-writing groups, and continuing research that begins in an institute, follow-up occurs fairly naturally. In addition to these individual pursuits, most institute organizers schedule formal follow-up events ranging from lectures to reunion parties. People attending these events have a kind of religious enthusiasm for the experiences they've shared in their institutes. The proof is in the satisfaction and continuing commitment to learning and sharing that comes from the participants. These are strong communities of learners who have struggled and usually achieved something that transforms them as teachers.

State-Sponsored Institutes for Teaching and Learning
Several states organize inservice institutes that are frameworks for developing staff in priority areas specified by federal, state, or local mandates. The state education agency usually approves programs, helps support training costs, and serves as a coordinator for a series of training events. As in other institute examples, these training sessions last one to two weeks and have follow-up sessions or requirements for implementation during the school year. The difference in a state-run institute is in the scope of offerings; they may revolve around a limited number of general concerns, such as teacher effectiveness research or basic skills instruction, but can offer as many as one hundred sessions to participants. Individuals typically participate in one or two courses for continuing education credit and may, or may not, come in teams from their home school districts.

The advantage to the state agency is that hundreds of teachers are engaging in learning activities on priority areas in education. The collective wisdom gained in these institutes can generate considerable reflection and influence on teaching in schools.

Conditions Necessary for Success

Because of the intensity of the learning experience and the need to support extended time, concentration, and application of knowledge, institutes should be planned as much as possible with participating individuals and districts. Participants have to be able to influence the scope, expectations, and rewards of joining an institute. It is essential that they enter willingly and knowingly into the activities of the institute, adjusting and shaping outcomes appropriate to their individual learning needs. The time required of participants is too long to expect them to sit passively and let ideas wash over them.

Ideas or activities presented in an institute should be framed in an adult learning context. People need to have a rationale for the strategies or program; they need to take time to make connections to past experience, practice these new approaches in a comfortable laboratory setting, and discuss the applicability with peers. Most teachers proceed from learning skills, to practicing them with adults, to trying them with students, to deciding whether or not they are workable. If the various thresholds are not accommodated, a transformation in practice will not occur.

Another consideration is cost. Many of these institutes are grand events, featuring speakers from around the country, multiple training opportunities, and alternative settings where people reside, eat, and learn together. Sometimes it is easier for a state agency or a private sponsor to subsidize an institute than it is for a school to support such costs. Despite the costs, institutes can be highly motivational for teachers and are generally worth the effort to fund them.

Because of the dramatic potential of institutes, versatile presenters are crucial. They must be able to use a variety of modes of instruction to engage participants at their own level. Lecture, small group discussion, large group seminars, hands-on activity, and private time for reflection and analysis are all valuable in their own right. Over-reliance on any one strategy to the exclusion of others tends to tune out participants who need a change in approach. Also, the designers of institutes need to consider the discomfort of new learning and arrange activities so they build competency gradually and offer support to individuals along the way.

Follow-up is another critical factor making or breaking institutes. After a crowning experience during a summer institute, all other staff development activities can pale by comparison. The school or district can and should reinforce the learnings of the institute by scheduling sharing sessions or seminars on topics developed in institutes. Then individuals will see that their learning matters to and enhances the growth of their school or district. Even if institute participants come away with a strong set of questions instead of answers, they will still appreciate their ability to continue reflection and dialogue with their peers. This endorsement of the learning can serve as a powerful incentive for taking on such challenges.

Commentary

The term 'institute' is sometimes used to formalize or even heighten the significance of a set of workshops. Although the meaning of institute is still in formation in the staff development arena, analysis of the most successful ones indicates they have some distinguishing characteristics: extended time, concentrated focus, supportive environment for learning, and methods for transferring and extending the learning beyond the institute. Without these features, the intensity of the learning experience is lessened, and its benefits may be lost.

A related issue is the trade-offs between institutes that take the learners far away from their teaching context and result in renewed commitment, enthusiasm, and skill—and a series of in-district workshops that are highly context-based, requiring immediate application of learning and building in continual interactions with both colleagues and trainer. The summer institutes sponsored for teachers to learn new science curricula in the 1960s had poor track records—largely because teachers returned to their schools to face the same structural barriers to innovation. They also found expectations from administrators, parents, and colleagues about what it meant to teach and learn science that contradicted what they had learned in the institutes. New approaches and materials were difficult to implement with seats bolted to the floor, administrators expecting quiet, orderly classrooms, and parents expecting their children to learn science 'facts'. Institutes that took people away from and ignored the context to which they returned often had minimal effect on schools.

Yet it may be that we simply need to be clearer in our expectations for the outcomes of institutes. Renewed enthusiasm and commitment to teaching, with different ways of thinking about it, may be the greatest reward. Perhaps it is a mistake to look for too many concrete outcomes of an institute. Very often, the learning appears to be its own reward, and the carryover is imprecise at best. This is when one has to trust that a provocative experience for a teacher will start a change within that will manifest itself sometime, in some unpredictable way in the future. If the teacher shows renewed energy for teaching, then probably the benefit is there and development is occurring.

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Networks

For the last several years, a group of administrators and teachers from northern Vermont has been focusing on school improvement. Effective schools literature and their own experiences led this core group to build an informal network for the give and take of information. They believed that by sharing human and financial resources, especially for staff development, all would benefit. They saw this sharing as a way to improve education for all students in their schools.

This informal network became known as the Northwest Outcomes-Based Network. Members of the network share a set of common beliefs regarding the Mastery Learning model of instruction and outcomes-based instructional design. As the core group of educational leaders grew enthusiastic in their commitment to the approach, they encouraged others to learn about it. Teachers and administrators talked over beliefs, shared research, and visited Johnson City, New York, to see the design in action. School board members, teacher trainers, and researchers grew interested and supportive. School boards took time to consider the belief system of outcomes-based education, and some adopted it as policy. Teachers, charged with a belief that all students can learn what we teach them, started to change classroom practices according to their needs and inclinations. Curricula were scrutinized to determine what was absolutely necessary for advancement to the next grade, what was appropriate enrichment for those who mastered objectives.

Staff development was revitalized as faculties grappled with challenges posed by the equality of opportunity for all students. Teachers and administrators jointly planned and delivered professional development experiences and opportunities designed to encourage implementation of outcomes-based educational practices. Administrators met frequently to share progress and problems and to organize joint staff development experiences for their teachers and them-

> *selves. Many teachers participated as speakers, panel members, and facilitators at joint inservice days for network schools. They talked shop with colleagues. Teachers coached teachers, shared lesson plans, visited each other's classrooms, discussed and problem-solved in their efforts to implement the new practices (Denny & Hood, 1986).*

As the above portrayal illustrates, a network is a professional community that is organized around a common theme or purpose. Richard Haight defines a network as "a pattern of interaction. . . characterized by information exchange, usually leading to other human interactions." Network members have something in common and communicate about it (in McConkey & Crandall, 1985, p. 30). Hedin's (1984) research on networks suggests that successful networks have members who are committed to a new idea or philosophy and who feel commitment and loyalty to each other. A sense of equality and generosity develops, manifesting itself in the sharing of personal and professional support given voluntarily. Members demonstrate spontaneity, flexibility, and informality in their contacts with other network members. An atmosphere of openness and sharing helps members to see each other as fellow problem solvers from whom they are willing to ask for help.

Underlying Assumptions

Meaningful improvement in educational programs occurs best when members of an educational community share common beliefs and work together as equals toward common goals.

A networking approach fosters the development of a professional community, developing norms of collegiality, continuous improvement, and experimentation. Common interests, experiences, and frequent interaction result in the development of a common language that encourages frequent communication about improvement—shop talk. Teachers are no longer isolated in their classrooms struggling alone with instructional decisions and problems. Active network members have access to a variety of opportunities for peer support in their efforts to experiment with the new ideas and practices that focus their professional community.

A networking approach builds the capacity of its members to identify and solve their own problems.

Shared training and follow-up activities increase the knowledge pool within the network. Network members become engaged with the language and practice of a particular approach. As they grapple with their growing understanding, reflect and discuss their experimentation and implementation, they begin to take on educational leadership roles themselves. They participate in coaching and training one another. They may deliver workshops or write newsletter articles in which they share their learnings and successes. With every success and its recognition, their professionalism is heightened. They continue to grapple with improvements and implementation of the new practices, but with an increasing sense of efficacy and confidence in their individual and collective ability to identify and solve their own problems and effect improvements that work within their context.

What They Look Like in Practice

Networks may emerge spontaneously, or they may be more consciously created by one or two people. Hedin (1984) describes spontaneous network formation as beginning with isolated innovators, change agents, problem solvers who discover their shared interests and concerns usually through contact at meetings or conferences. Eventually, they say "Why don't we have a meeting?" They form an informal network, coordinated by one or two organizers. They develop some sort of name for themselves, clarify their purpose, designate facilitators, and arrange to have meetings with some regularity.

McConkey and Crandall (1984) describe the stages for more conscious creation of a network as

1. the group determines a purpose;
2. they determine who might be contacted to help achieve that purpose;
3. they make contact with others around the determined purpose; and
4. they recontact one another.

However networks are formed, once formed they are based on interactions—exchanging information and providing moral/professional support. A common language and body of practices emerge as network members continue to share their experiences and problem-solve their implementation attempts. Members engage in frequent formal and informal communication regarding their learnings, problems, and successes.

A hallmark of a successful professional development network is the provision of a variety of ways to encourage information sharing, collegial problem solving, and recognition of progress and success toward network goals. Networks might include any or all of the following supportive activities:

- a collaborative calendar, emphasizing joint inservice days
- a newsletter about accomplishments and coming events
- classroom exchanges and visitation among network members
- discussion groups that provide opportunities for problem sharing and solution finding for members
- frequent sharing of materials to further the application of the new practices, e.g., units, books, articles, videos.

Conditions Necessary for Success

McConkey and Crandall (1984) suggest a set of five essentials for effective networks:

1. *Keeping a focus:* Members should be wary of losing sight of the purpose for the network. New interests and more complex relationships may emerge through networking, but as the principal intent of its formation becomes less clear, the greater the chance the network will cease to meet its members' needs.

2. *Staying in touch:* A network is not a network without communication. Members should make it a point to touch base every few weeks or months with other members.

3. *Keeping it small:* A network needs to be small in order to encourage frequent communication. Even very active networkers are more successful within multiple, small, focused networks than within single, giant ones. Networks may overlap, but each should be "bitesized and workable."

4. *Keeping it simple and cheap:* The strength, endurance, and effectiveness of a network is often directly related to its lack of complexity and the low cost of active participation.

5. *Reciprocating:* Networkers need to be able to count on each other. A lack of commitment and loyalty, as well as a lack of frequent communication, will result in dissolution of the network. Hedin (1984) expands on the importance of reciprocating. She identifies

the following critical conditions for successful networking:

- a commitment to the purpose
- a commitment to each other
- a sense of openness and caring
- information never used at the expense of another network member
- personal and psychological support
- voluntary participation
- equal treatment for everyone.

Benefits

Networking expands the boundaries of its members and reduces isolation from peers. Networking results in increased communication among/between levels of the system. Internal and external team building are encouraged. Opportunities are provided for access to each other's experience and to authoritative practical knowledge. It also provides opportunities for the sharing of ideas on classroom and curriculum practice.

Network training and information sharing activities create an expanded pool of knowledgeable and skilled people who have confidence in their knowledge base, encouraging the development of a common language and continued growth in practice. Norms of professionalism and collegiality are supported. Active network participants experience a greater sense of efficacy. As local human resources are developed, so is the local capacity for identification and resolution of local problems and needs.

Lastly, networking provides opportunities for recognition of progress toward school improvement goals and for celebration of individual accomplishments that further the vision and direction of network members.

Commentary

Networks, by their nature, are informal structures whose members vary the extent and intensity of their participation as they please. This has both advantages and disadvantages from the point of view of the overall staff development program. The advantages include the availability of a wide variety of resources from a large number of sources. This serves the needs of proactive teachers, particularly ones with specific, well-defined needs and a good sense of what could meet those needs. However, while networks surround the individual with possible resources, they work less well for passive people—ones who are less clear of their needs and what will help them. Even in a highly supportive network, less articulate members are less likely to benefit. However, a network that has some proactive components, such as inservice offerings and topical events, or one that is part of an overall inservice program that includes more active, engaging approaches, has the potential for meeting a wide range of professional development needs.

Related to this issue is the need for some strong glue for a network—some one or some organization that takes a leadership and management role in keeping the connections alive and feeding them with new knowledge, information, and opportunities. While people often picture networks as creating invisible bonds between individuals that are activated only when someone needs something, those needs can be stimulated and activity and energy generated quite beneficially. However, that has to be a role somebody plays on purpose, or the potential of a network may never be realized. In fact, it is essential if the people, the knowledge, and the experiences that reside in network members are to be taken full advantage of.

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Partnerships

> *A partnership is like a marriage in which each partner complements the other in achieving what neither can achieve alone. In a partnership as in a marriage, there are mutual rights and responsibilities depending on each party's willingness to collaborate and to give up a measure of independence. . . . They enter into a formal agreement to engage in activity together—in other words, to get married. There is no need for them to get married if either one of them has the whole ball game, but since neither of them does, they need to collaborate* (Goodlad, 1986).

The most startling thing about partnerships for teacher development is how varied they are. These variations are quite evident in the following examples, some of them school/university partnerships, and others, school/business partnerships.

The University of Vermont has joined with schools to support staff development through the formation of school improvement collaboratives. In the collaboratives, participants can earn master's degrees through course work directly tied to local school improvement projects. University personnel assist school personnel in identifying their needs, developing a common vision for school improvement, and developing the programs and skills necessary to carry out that vision. Teachers and administrators take courses and attend training institutes, most of which are offered at the school. All courses carry with them projects that are directly related to previously identified school improvement directions and development goals. Technical assistance services for fine-tuning and integrating locally designed improvement projects are made available as needed. Teachers who have completed research and/or other technical courses often become consultants and trainers in their own or neighboring districts (Clark & Hood, 1986).

The University of Alabama and the Regional Consortium for Professional Development (made up of 12 adjoining school districts) have joined in a partnership that provides in-depth, voluntary weekend workshops in which teachers can choose their courses and earn graduate credits. Based upon an annual needs assessment, approximately 20 topics are offered at any given time. The workshops are held at central locations throughout the region. The university pays for the cost of conducting the workshops, while teachers pay regular tuition or workshop fees (Condra, 1986).

School/university partnerships in 14 states have formed the **National Network for Educational Renewal**, an effort led by John Goodlad. The partnerships are tackling various aspects of school reform, many of which involve the professional development of teachers, such as new roles for teachers in schools and developing curricular responses for students at risk of failure (Olson, 1987).

During the summer of 1985, 55 Cleveland public school and college teachers improved their teaching skills in science and mathematics and increased their awareness of business and technical occupations through hands-on experiences coordinated by **Cleveland's Teacher Internship Program.** A junior high school math teacher, for example, earned a stipend as an intern with an aerospace and automotive conglomerate, while she learned to use a computer to perform financial and tax system functions (Gold, 1987).

The Lawrence (MA) School Industry Project experimented with a creative experiential approach to staff development, providing opportunities for teachers to try out new roles such as colearner in the classroom, student advisor, and industry-education liaison. This joint project trained high school students to use a basic statistical charting technique for improving quality and productivity in business and industry and developed a corps of teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to integrate quality/productivity theory into classroom curricula. Teachers and high school students were first instructed together by the business trainers. Their co-training was followed by high school student placement at the business site, where they practiced and applied the techniques under the guidance of a business-mentor. Teachers made site visits and served as industry liaisons and student advisors throughout the training program (Murray, 1984).

The St. Louis Park (MN) Schools and Honeywell Industries established a partnership in which school and business personnel exchanged a variety of professional development resources. They formed a team to develop and conduct career development training sessions for industry personnel. Honeywell invited school administrators to participate in a three-day management seminar and offered two seminars on creative problem solving designed specifically for school administrators, community education coordinators, staff specialists, and administrative secretaries. Also, they made available on an as-needed basis their Corporate Conference Center for off-site school meetings and seminars (Erickson & Bengston, 1984).

As these examples suggest, the range of professional development topics, directions, and specific activities that may be supported by partnerships is infinite. Partnerships are meeting many needs and are ideally suited to providing effective professional development opportunities for teachers. Teachers are gaining access to new professional perspectives, experiences in and with other institutions, and additional resources for professional development. Colleges and universities are gaining new clients, assistance in program modifications, and new clinical settings and teaching staff. Businesses have the opportunity to influence the quality and effectiveness of the institutions supplying workers, maintain community health, and gain access to educational resources for use in their own programs.

Underlying Assumptions

Quality education is a community responsibility.

Partnerships for professional development are based on the assumption that the quality and effectiveness of our educational system is the responsibility of the entire community, not just the schools. School administrators, teachers, and university professors are discovering an identity as members of a shared profession and are building a shared vision within an entire community about what constitutes educational excellence. Business and the private sector are recognizing the importance of public education in preparing young people to be good citizens, to be economically independent, and to live fulfilling lives. All are discovering that they have important goals in common and that many of the problems of young people must be addressed by all members of a community.

Partners are equal.

Partnerships, to be effective, must truly be a two-way exchange of resources and knowledge. Partners have equal but different roles to play. Their joint efforts are based on a mutual belief that each has something to share and each can make important contributions to the effort.

Partnerships assume that a primary goal is mutual satisfaction of self-interest for each partner. Partners are, to some degree, dissimilar. Each partner has an important need or interest that is met by the partnership. Yet, in successful partnerships, each partner is selfless enough to assure that other partners are able to satisfy their self-interests as well. By contrast, unsuccessful partnerships tend to be characterized by too great or too little similarity, little overlap of interests, and unwillingness to change behavior or give up ground. As noted in our opening quote, successful partnership is in large measure symbiotic, like marriage. It unites partners rather intimately in mutually beneficial relationships (Goodlad, 1986).

What They Look Like in Practice

Partnerships for professional development may serve almost any purpose and include any number of activities desired by the partners involved. Rather than attempt to describe the infinite variety of specific partnership projects, this section focuses on an interesting dimension in which partnerships appear to vary their scope and intensity with some illustrations of each.

In looking across a wide array of partnerships, it is possible to differentiate them into three clusters: those based on *support* for each partner; those based on *cooperation* between partners; and those based on *collaboration* (Zacchei & Mirman, 1986). There are two ways of viewing these different clusters. Just as Rome was not built in a day, neither do partnerships spring into full-blown collaborations overnight. Thus it happens that many partnerships develop from fairly minimal relationships between partners to much more robust ones. They pass through developmental stages of increasingly more involved and demanding degrees of commitment. From this viewpoint, the three clusterings—support, cooperation, collaboration—can characterize where a single partnership is in its development.

From another point of view, some partnerships never intend to be more than support between partners, and others work on cooperative activities, with no plan for extensive collaboration. There is no development from one kind of partnership to another. Whatever the point of view, the three kinds of partnerships appear to be quite distinct one from another, varying in what partners attempt to accomplish for themselves, their commitment of resources, involvement of personnel, and range of specific activities. Each kind varies in what goals are set, which activities are planned, who does what, as well as the processes of communication, decision making and implementation. In addition, the kinds of professional development opportunities they offer teachers vary.

When a partnership is based on *support,* activities often involve short-term, single events. The basic objective is to establish better ties, to open communications, and to create some awareness of each other. Partners often plan activities that have a low level of risk, commitment, and coordination requirements. Examples of such partnerships include businesses allowing school administrators to attend their management training sessions; universities granting graduate credit for district-run inservices; and businesses assisting a school to conduct an annual communitywide event.

While many relationships never intend to go beyond providing mutual support, often it represents a natural starting place for more intensive partnerships. A pool of "supportive contacts" develops, from which candidates for further involvement are identified. A dialogue is begun that can result in discovery of shared problems or goals important to both partners. In time, a mutual vision and working style may be established. Successfully executing small-scale activities often generates enthusiasm, increases momentum, and solidifies commitments, all leading to more extensive relationships.

Partnerships based on *cooperation* are characterized by greater degrees of involvement, commitment, and mutuality. Partners focus on accomplishing tasks with significant input from all. It is not unusual for partners in these kinds of relationships to be somewhat unequal. For example, a school may find itself on the receiving end of some community relations, marketing, or experimental project of a business or college. Cooperation typically involves a small core of people serving as a management structure for identifying areas of mutual interest and planning activities. Partners contribute more staff time than in support relationships, thus requiring greater approval and commitment from upper management. While there are mutual efforts and shared understanding of need, activities are still relatively short-term in scope, with moderate and unequal levels of resource commitment. The earlier descriptions of the Cleveland and Lawrence projects may be examples of this kind of partnership.

Collaborative partnerships are symbiotic relationships in which partners are not simply representatives from distinct organizations. They operate as equals, creating a group or working unit that functions across organizational boundaries. While partners retain their self-interest, they are each committed to a consensual vision and have agreed upon long-term program activities, policies, and procedures. A full-fledged collaborative partnership is an established entity with a legitimate mission, a solid structure, and a definable program. Members and activities may change, but the partnership structure and direction remains. The partnership is a stable component of the professional development program within the school or district. Objectives and activities allow full participation and reciprocation of each partner. Over time, partners may broaden the scope of their activities, expanding programs and involving other organizations. The Vermont project and many of the partnerships in the National Network for Educational Renewal are examples of such ongoing commitment and collaboration. (For a more detailed description of this partnership model, see Zacchei and Mirman, 1986.)

Conditions Necessary for Success

Realistic Expectations. Partners need to have realistic expectations about what kind of relationship they want to have, how long it will take to develop, and what is required to be successful. They need to recognize that it is natural for partnerships to evolve from supportive but short-term and episodic interactions to longer-term programs requiring significant commitments. Initially, short-term activities rather than long-range goals propel the partnership. Larger, superordinate goals for collaboration become clearer after people have worked together a while. Partners must develop a history of shared experiences that, over time, build the trust and respect necessary for the high levels of involvement and commitment required by full collaboration.

Involvement. Partners must feel an equal stake in the success of the joint venture, and they must be invested in quality staff development. Levels of participation must be at a depth that all participants feel an ownership of the collaborative program. There must be a loss of territoriality and a mutual investment in the benefits that the collaborative program represents.

Successful collaborative partnerships need to identify and structure opportunities for joint exploration and planning. Each person's role and expectations should be clarified, especially those that require significant investment of time and energy. Partners must assume responsibility for follow-up steps to assure that programs become more than short-term, serving small groups of students or being supported by temporary funding. To stay interested and committed, partners must see significant results, some important benefits of being involved. When they do see results, they take credit as a team and publicize the process and products of their joint efforts.

Commitment. A high level of commitment from each partner is necessary to enable a partnership to be truly collaborative. Commitment involves significant allotments of time and energy. People often underestimate the amount of energy it takes to work with other people, especially in activities as complex as professional development. Thus, there must be administrative support for the collaborators. If the school and its teachers are to be more than the passive receivers of someone else's professional development program, then school personnel must commit significant time and energy to planning, delivering, and following up on the joint training activities.

Deep commitment to a collaborative venture grows from the trust that develops over time among partners. Trust leads to a willingness to risk the commitment of significant resources and energy. Trust develops when collaborative programs operate within the spirit of collaboration, rather than just within the mechanical arrangements of a plan and a program.

Leadership. Partnerships do not form, nor do they thrive, without strong, visionary leadership. Because partnerships often feel above and beyond the call of duty to participants who already have a full worklife, the motivating force of a leader (or leaders) is vital. Beyond motivation, though, good leadership keeps activities moving, coordinating people, timelines, and tasks so that everyone knows what is happening and benefits are visible.

Benefits

The benefits of partnerships are infinite, depending on the specific efforts that are undertaken. No matter what the goals, partnerships with businesses and institutions of higher education can build local capacity for school improvement. Partnerships can provide the opportunity to pool resources and can bring in additional resources for comprehensive and relevant staff development. Partnerships can encourage teachers to try on new perspectives, protecting them from becoming too insular and from depending solely on other educators for new techniques and training. Partnerships for staff development can keep teachers in touch with a broader knowledge base and the realities of our society. All parties are enriched by the opportunity to become more familiar with the culture and ways of doing things in different organizations.

Commentary

The current wave of reform and heightened communitywide interest in the quality of education provides us with a friendly climate for establishing partnerships for staff development. Now is an ideal time to explore and develop them. Yet there are some important considerations that need thought before and during the establishment of a partnership and some pitfalls to avoid.

As noted above, any kind of collaboration takes time and attention, far more than anyone expects at the inception. This includes duration (i.e., the timeline will be longer), as well as time-on-task (i.e., each activity, such as a planning session, will take longer). This is due to a number of things: it takes time for trust to build; to learn to speak a common language; to understand the world view of people whose daily lives, including demands and activities, are far different from one's own. Being realistic about time demands is critical to establishing a workable partnership. It probably is a useful rule of thumb to double the time one would expect the planning and execution of activities to take, rather than underestimate and regret it later.

Another consideration is in choosing what to do in a partnership. Clearly, it is often easier and more appropriate to do things unilaterally than in concert with others. Thus, it is important to identify what activities can best be accomplished through partnering, rather than jumping at the first good idea. For example, collaborating with a university to provide graduate courses to teachers may not be a good idea if teachers don't need graduate credits and there are excellent in-district trainers available. Likewise, placing a teacher intern with a local industry just because the offer was made and the placement seemed remotely connected to the teacher's specialty may not be as good a use of teacher time as some other kind of in-district opportunity. It is better to look for ways to solve persistent problems or extend current directions through partnerships than jump at the first, often easy, opportunity to collaborate.

Finally, although it seems selfish, each partner needs to be clear that they are getting something out of a partnership. Like the marriage Goodlad talked about in our beginning quote, a relationship where one party just gives and doesn't receive can get old quickly, even if the initial giving was highly rewarding. Because they are hard work to keep alive and well, partnerships have to be in the self-interest of both parties, and that self-interest and its achievement need to be reflected on periodically to ensure continued commitment.

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Training of Trainers

> *We have a lot of people who need to learn how to use the program, we can't afford to keep bringing back the 'experts,' and we need to keep up the momentum. Training our own trainers isn't a choice, it's a necessity!*
>
> —*Chair of a Staff Development Team*

> *It seemed like such a good solution. After all, we had some pretty terrific teachers we could use. How hard could it be to teach other teachers how to use the new writing program? Well, we found out. It's not that easy for teachers who have spent ten years teaching kids to all of a sudden teach their peers.*
>
> —*High School Principal*

The training-of-trainers approach has been used with a high degree of success in schools, human service agencies, and business. It presents an efficient strategy for renewing numerous people on the job and offers a new educational role (trainer of adults) to professionals who have considerable knowledge to share with their colleagues. Terms such as *certified trainer* and *turnkey trainer* are widely used labels for people who have been prepared and designated as expert in a particular program or practice and who have accepted the responsibility to share their knowledge and skills with others. These individuals may be peers (e.g., teachers training other teachers), or supervisors, administrators, parents, professional trainers/consultants, or adult educators by profession.

Despite the common understanding of the term and experience with effective trainers, setting up a successful training-of-trainers program can be a challenge. Visiting experts make training look so easy and natural. When the time comes for identifying and preparing local trainers who can follow the outsider's design, several questions arise:

- Will we find a local trainer with the knowledge and enthusiasm necessary to build commitment to the program?

- Is there a training-of-trainers session available for prospective program leaders or will we have to create our own training session?
- What kind of incentives can we offer our local trainers, and will we be able to provide them the necessary time to train and support others?
- How much preparation will they really need? Do they need to do any more than go through the training themselves?
- How can we be sure they can deliver as well as an outside expert?

These are the questions that we discuss in this section. But first, a distinction. When we talk about *training of trainers,* we mean preparing people in a school or district to assist others in learning about and using a particular program or practice. It is thus a more narrowly focused approach than that of advising or specialist teacher, which we describe in another section. While the preparation and roles of trainers and advisors have some things in common, what we are talking about here is the strategy of building local capacity to train and support teachers in the use of a specific practice or program.

Underlying Assumptions

The most cost-effective way to improve staff skills is to invest in local trainers who can work closely with the staff.

Staff development programs often have far fewer resources than they need to train everyone involved in implementing a new program or practice. Often, the training opportunity is far away, and covering the travel costs of sending large numbers of people to be trained is prohibitive. In other cases, it is not feasible to free everyone who needs the training at the same time, such as when the outside expert or developer is on-site. Therefore, the investment is made in preparing a small number of people and charging them with training others.

Internal trainers can be more readily available to provide ongoing assistance to staff.

One of the keys to transferring skills from one person to another is to provide opportunity for practice, with feedback. If the only source of this assistance is the external developer or trainer, cost and availability considerations again can become a major impediment to success. Trained local trainers can provide refresher training and ongoing assistance more immediately, directly, and inexpensively than can the external trainer/developer.

People trained and functioning as trainers develop a stronger use of the new program or practice and have a greater commitment to its success in the school or district.

People who teach others learn doubly well. Further, the success of a new program or practice often depends not only on the knowledge and skills of implementors, but on their commitment to its success. People who have accepted the responsibility of training and assisting their colleagues seem to develop an investment in success that helps sustain them and others over the difficulties of early implementation. The leadership roles resulting from expertise in a program create new professional opportunities for teachers or supervisors and provide a support structure for instruction that might otherwise not exist.

Teachers accept new learning better from peers and colleagues who understand their reality and with whom they can identify.

Teachers may be skeptical about a new program or practice for many reasons—they are happy with current practice, they do not see the benefits of the new method, they are not confident in their ability to implement it successfully, they are unconvinced of the benefit to students, etc. Learning from a respected colleague who is committed to the change and convinced of its worth (in their own setting) can do much to allay fears, stimulate interest, and foster the willingness to give the new approach a try.

Trained local trainers have a better sense of how the program or practice needs to be adapted to fit local conditions.

Most new programs or practices require some degree of adaptation when transferred to a new setting. The developer/trainer may not be totally able to identify the necessary adaptations, especially if he or she is not involved directly in working with implementors on site. Turnkey trainers, however, can often work through adaptations during their training and preparation. They can then assist others they train to tailor the program or practice appropriately to the situation without violating essential features and implementation considerations.

Local practitioners can be adequately trained and prepared by the developer (or outside expert) to not only learn the new program or practice, but to transfer the knowledge and skills to others.

Perhaps the most basic assumption on which the decision to use the training-of-trainers approach is made is the belief that it is possible to adequately train and prepare people to transfer knowledge and skills to implementors. It is not at all surprising that educators accept this principle; it is the basis of the profession.

Within this assumption, however, are embedded many significant qualifiers: the calibre of the turnkey trainers, the quality of the training and preparation, the structure and adequacy of the training process, etc. These considerations will be addressed specifically in the following sections.

Characteristics of a Successful Training-of-Trainers Approach

Successful training-of-trainers efforts pay attention to the people who will participate; the district and school settings in which they will work; and the preparation and support they will receive so they can carry out their training responsibilities (Schiff, 1982; Williams, 1982). We begin our discussion with the people.

Certified trainers require certain knowledge, skills, personal characteristics, and situational opportunities to work effectively. The required knowledge and skills include in-depth knowledge of the program or practice they will train people to use and skills in training and supporting adults (understanding of the difference between teaching children and training adults). The first is usually (and best) acquired through direct experience in being trained in and then using the program in classroom settings. Developing the skills of working with adults can be part of their preparation to become trainers, as described later.

Certified trainers also need to have certain personal characteristics. These include credibility with teachers, desire to function as a turnkey trainer, and commitment to the program or practice. Certain situational considerations are also required, including availability and willingness to follow implementation procedures, to participate in followup training, etc.

The school or district needs to follow systematic procedures for identifying and selecting people to function as turnkey or certified trainers. When the program is one that a district has developed, pilot test teachers can constitute the pool of potential trainers. Teachers who have implemented the program well, have solved the nitty-gritty problems of early use, and can articulate what the program has to offer and why—these have good trainer potential. Whether or not the program was developed and/or has been used in the district or school, there need to be criteria for selecting people to be certified and a process by which that selection takes place.

A good training-of-trainers program specifically addresses the role, competencies, and responsibilities of the turnkey trainer. It includes training in staff development principles and practices, for example, adult learning, the change process, learning styles, design of workshops, active participation strategies, warm-up and team-building skills, group facilitation, communication skills, and supervision/coaching skills. Participants work with the actual training materials, discuss common questions, and deal with obstacles to implementation. The turnkey trainer is given a training design, materials, and implementation guidelines to use with trainees. Also, the trainer has opportunities to practice the presentations and receives coaching from the program developer.

The training program communicates clearly what it expects of the new trainer. The trainer understands the required time commitments and the responsibilities to trainees and to the program. For example, the trainer may have to offer "awareness" sessions before training to prepare the audience; send participant lists and evaluations to the program developer when requested; and conduct follow-up sessions in accordance with needs of users. The trainer's supervisors must authorize the work and understand the time and commitments necessary to conduct training-related activities.

A good training-of-trainers program contains a mechanism for assessing the effectiveness of the trainer and for dealing with performance problems. Training sessions are evaluated, at minimum through participant feedback, ideally through observation and feedback sessions. Procedures exist for dealing with poor performance, such as coaching, retraining, or if necessary terminating turnkey trainer status.

Information, problem solving, and resource assistance is readily available to turnkey trainers. They can directly contact a knowledgeable resource person (ideally, the developer or core developer staff) to clarify implementation procedures, trouble shoot local implementation problems, discuss adaptation possibilities, and obtain suggestions for strengthening implementation. A structure for communicating with and supporting people serving as turnkey or certified trainers is in place and functioning. Thus, the school or district can benefit from expert advice and networking long after their trainer has been certified.

An Example of a District-Level Training-of-Trainers Program

The Adams County (CO) School District has a training-of-trainers approach to providing staff development opportunities to teachers in the district (Harrison, 1986). It represents a good example of how a district uses a general training program to prepare teachers and others to be effective trainers. Then the teachers apply that training to particular programs or practices the teachers, schools, or district wish to implement.

The Adams County District evolved over a three-year period from a staff development department consisting of one training specialist to a structure fostering the development of over one hundred trainers. Such a structure was necessary, since the district had implemented a wide variety of effective programs and practices, many of which resulted from initial training by nationally known trainers and developers. To maintain and expand these efforts, and to initiate others, the district needed to establish its own internal training capability.

At the heart of the district's training-of-trainers program is a twenty-four-hour course, where new trainers learn how to train others. The first phase of the course covers how to deliver the content, how to design effective training sessions, and how to connect with and respond to the needs of adult learners. Topics include: training formats and instructional sequence, content analysis, teaching and learning aids, and the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (a research-based model for matching a learner's concerns with appropriate training and support) (Hall & Loucks, 1978). Other topics discussed are adult learning patterns, leadership roles, evaluation techniques, and characteristics of effective staff development programs.

The second phase is a practicum where participants practice making presentations and receive feedback from the instructor and fellow participants. This phase requires six hours of instructional time and forms the foundation for beginning to train others.

The Adams County program contains not only a core course for trainers but also a supportive setting for serving as a local staff development specialist. The new trainer benefits from the experience of other staff developers in the district and works in a context supporting growth and development.

The district training-of-trainers program has different procedures for trainers preparing to train others in a practice or program that already exists in the district, and in one that would be new to the district. To become a trainer for an existing offering, the requirements are

- enrollment in the offering one is interested in teaching;
- successful completion of the Training the Trainer course;
- participation a second time in the offering one is interested in teaching to observe and record how the training works;
- team teaching portions of the offering with its trainer;

- receiving feedback from staff development supervisors during the team teaching;
- being recommended as a new trainer by the district's full-time staff developers and/or by the current trainers for the course; and
- working as a new trainer with the district's staff development supervisors to establish growth targets that must be achieved within one year.

Teachers and administrators in the district are also able to design a new staff development offering and qualify to train others in it. To do so, they must

- substantiate the need for the new offering;
- design and then review the proposed syllabus and outcomes with a district staff developer;
- successfully complete the Training the Trainer course;
- prepare teaching scripts for the new offering with assistance from a district staff developer;
- receive coaching and instructional conferences from a district staff developer;
- be recommended as a new trainer by a district staff developer. The staff developer also recommends whether the offering should be included in the district's staff development program; and
- work with a district staff developer to establish growth targets that must be met within one year.

Benefits

When they have the characteristics described above, training-of-trainers programs have the potential for impact in a number of different areas. First, they provide a cost-effective way to offer more teachers more growth opportunities. Rather than relying on an expensive and geographically distant external expert, a school or district with an in-house trainer can both train and support on an ongoing basis a large number of teachers at the cost of only released time for the trainer.

Second, training-of-trainers programs provide professional growth experiences for the trainers themselves. New responsibilities, status, and opportunities to work intensively with other professionals are powerful incentives for teachers to both sharpen their own skills and stay in the teaching profession.

Finally, districts and schools that use a training-of-trainers approach increase their own capacity for improvement and renewal. Well-prepared trainers are much more attuned to the process and requirements for meaningful change; they work well with other professionals; and they are committed to and appreciate opportunities for growth and development. Future efforts have greater potential for success, because staff are better motivated and prepared to participate.

Commentary

There is some debate about how much a training-of-trainers approach can actually impart to a person who aspires to be a trainer, given the limited amount of time that they typically have. The question is, can a teacher become a trainer for a given program if she or he doesn't already have the knowledge and skills on which the program is based, or if he or she doesn't already know how to work well with adults? Some training-of-trainers programs are based on a "yes" answer to both parts of the question. They work at providing both content and process for the new trainer. Other training programs require that participants have demonstrated successful use of the content (i.e., the practice or program) in classrooms, so that they can concentrate on learning how to help others do the same. We know of no hard data to support either tack. What we do know is that with new practices that require teachers to make real changes in their approaches to teaching, a trainer is not created by simply attending training. Turnkey training has meant to some that "you take the training, you can train others." Our experience shows that this works only in the exceptional situation and cannot be relied on. It is certainly not what we mean by a training-of-trainers approach.

Another issue related to this approach is quality control. A school or district wants to know that the teacher it sends to become a trainer will be a good one; the developer or trainer who certifies the teacher wants to know that she or he will remain true to the critical elements of both the program and the training design. Such quality control concerns need to be voiced and appropriate measures taken. As we noted earlier, evaluating the new trainer before final certification is a responsibility of the training-of-trainers staff. Adams County takes such quality control measures as the establishment of clear guidelines, formal observation and assessment, and the setting of performance objectives for certified trainers. However it is done, attention to the quality of training is vital—

otherwise, all benefits of having local trainers instead of the "tried and true" experts may be lost.

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Individually Guided Professional Development

In an urban elementary school, compensatory reading instruction was identified as a critical area needing improvement. Through consultation with system reading specialists, a group of classroom reading teachers decided that instruction could be improved by developing high interest reinforcement exercises. Such exercises could be clustered according to themes reflecting the seasons or holidays. To maximize student interest, nonprint as well as printed exercises could be developed. Given these ideas, the teachers set their individual development goals and planned their strategies. They met with their principal and reading specialist to review and discuss their plans in light of the initial goal of improving compensatory reading instruction and their present levels of performance. During the school year the group continued to meet periodically to review their progress and to discuss their impact on themselves, students, and important school goals. Based upon these ongoing assessments, they modified their individual development strategies. At the end of the year, the teachers documented their efforts to improve compensatory reading instruction as well as the impact of these efforts on student achievement and teacher development (Iwanicki & McEachern, 1983).

This scenario depicts a group of teachers pursuing individual development goals and strategies focused on the common need to improve compensatory reading instruction. Not all individually guided staff development efforts involve teachers collectively in pursuit of such a clear common goal, but they do involve teachers in defining and carrying out their own professional development activities.

In individually guided professional development, teachers:

- assess their own strengths and weaknesses, based upon formal or informal measures of their performance;
- identify their own areas for improvement and/or development;

- plan their own strategies for achieving their professional development or improvement goals; and
- continuously assess their own growth and performance relative to their professional development goals.

At its best, individually guided professional development engages teachers in working cooperatively to assess the impact of their improvement efforts on themselves, their students, and important school or district goals.

Underlying Assumptions

The personal judgment of teachers is the best source of direction for their individual growth goals.

Good staff development activities are not something done to teachers, but rather processes in which teachers are integrally involved according to their own interests and needs. This is especially important with well-established teachers who need to find their own sources of renewal. Individually guided professional development is based on a teacher's personal judgment about areas for self-improvement or further development, perhaps supplemented by advice from peers and supervisors. The key is that individually guided professional development activities respond to individuals' needs, which may or may not relate to larger priorities for school improvement.

Individual growth can best be pursued by teachers who build ongoing performance assessment into their plans.

To be successful, individual development efforts must be continuously guided by performance assessment. Good professional development programs recognize the fact that teachers' experience and expert knowledge of students and classrooms are continuing sources for improving practice. Self-assessment strategies may be objective or subjective; one may make use of structured assessment procedures or tools or simply personal reflection on one's experiences, observations, and discussions with others. Assessment activities may be carried out in the safety of solitude, or interactively, exposing oneself to outside input and analysis of one's performance. Whether formal or informal, solitary or interactive, performance assessments should be as complete and frequent as resources and time permit in order to adequately inform decisions and directions at all stages of the change effort.

The principles of adult learning should guide professional development experiences for teachers.

Good individualized professional development activities are grounded in the basic principles of adult development (Knowles, 1978). Adult motivations and needs are closely linked to experiences and interests. Experience is the richest source of adult learning, thus learning activities should be life-centered and focus on analysis of experience. Individual differences and the need to be self-directing increase with age; thus as teachers become more experienced, professional development activities need to increasingly provide for greater differences in style, time, place, and pace of learning. Each teacher is different, and each development plan differs accordingly.

What It Looks Like in Practice

Its dimensions

Individually guided professional development activities can look as different as the people involved in creating and carrying them out. The characteristics of individual professional development activities may vary along a number of dimensions.

> *Formal—Informal:* A teacher's improvement activities may be formal or informal. In an informal mode, a teacher, reflecting on how the reading program is going, may decide to add some language experience activities. She or he might then go to a professional library, find journals and sample materials that provide ideas, take them back to the classroom, and start using them. A few weeks later, considering how it's working, this same teacher may decide to read and look around some more, to continue adding new activities and ideas to his or her repertoire. On the more formal end of the continuum, another teacher may begin with a formal assessment of reading program activities and their impact on students. He or she might link assessment to other inservice initiatives in the building, such as outcomes-based instruction or effective teaching. In light of the assessment and other areas of interest, this teacher might then develop one or two improvement goals, write out strategies and resources needed to achieve those goals, and begin self-instruction, practicing and monitoring progress and impact.
>
> *Solitary—Interactive:* A teacher may engage in self-development alone or with others. She or he may assess, set goals, and implement changes using only a process of self-reflection; or the teacher may

seek input from other people close by, such as students, peers, fellow team members, or supervisors.

ShortTerm—LongTerm: A teacher may plan an improvement effort that takes many months or years to observe the desired impact or may choose a change that is quick and simple to accomplish and see results.

Micro—Macro: One teacher might choose a development area that only has implications for his or her own classroom. Another may choose to work on something cooperatively with other teachers or role groups in the school, such as developing effective teaching skills, sharing learnings and accomplishments with others along the way.

Planning considerations

While some individually guided development efforts are quite spontaneous and informal, a teacher's change efforts are more likely to bear fruit if they are focused, well planned, and thoughtfully implemented. After deciding on the area for change and development, teachers should consider the following factors in their individual development plans:

- the time required to make the change(s);
- the personal, material, and financial resources needed;
- the anticipated impact on themselves;
- the anticipated impact on their students; and
- the anticipated impact on crucial school objectives and on the professional development efforts of colleagues.

Use of self-assessment/self-analysis

Reliance on self-assessment and analysis is a key characteristic of individually guided professional development. A variety of approaches may be used; the more approaches used in concert, the more complete the assessment of performance in the area of intended change. Iwanicki and McEachern (1983) suggest three approaches to self-assessment. Each represents a different level of analysis to use in determining the focus for development, in setting goals, and in monitoring performance along the way. They are:

- *Individual assessments* that make use of personal reflection, classroom tapes, and/or self-assessment checklists. The most widely used type of self-assessment, they provide a personal look at how things are going in areas of interest to the teacher.

- *Feedback assessments* that make use of input from others, such as students, peers, and supervisors. Here the teacher gets more input than that garnered from self-assessment. In his or her area of interest, the teacher might ask questions, engage in discussions with others, or participate in regular building team meetings, workshops, or materials exchange programs. Through a variety of processes, the teacher gets more information and insight into her or his own performance in the area of interest.

- *Interactive assessments* that make use of processes such as clinical supervision, mentoring, coaching, and microteaching. Here the teacher not only seeks information from others, but involves them in the analysis of his or her performance.

Multiple modes
Once performance levels are determined, teachers may make use of a number of resources and strategies to enact self-improvement. They may turn to professional writing and materials such as journals, books, and video and audio tapes to get ideas. Or they may have access to self-paced instructional modules. They might get guidance simply from their own trial and error based upon their performance feedback, supplemented by observing and talking with other knowledgeable people around them.

Conditions Necessary for Success

A positive atmosphere must be established in which teachers perceive themselves as capable of improving, know that the resources to facilitate improvement will be provided, and believe that their development will be acknowledged and supported by the leadership of the school. To optimize learning for all, teachers need to be supported and encouraged to share their learnings and findings with other teachers and supervisors.

Individually guided development activities tend to be more meaningful in situations in which the teacher has a good understanding of the concepts required for the change effort, has had successful experience using individual and feedback assessment techniques, and perceives the school environment as supportive of his or her self-improvement efforts. This can happen when other inservice activities are available that orient teachers to the critical dimensions of the development area and introduce them to low inference assessment techniques for monitoring their own performance (Iwanicki & McEachern, 1983). Finally, the best efforts of self-study and self-analysis occur on a continuing basis and are incorporated formally into other staff development formats and into school or systemwide school improvement goals.

Benefits

Individually guided professional development activities, if well supported by school leadership, create and maintain an air of professionalism throughout the school. Many teachers working conscientiously in their own directions, being mindful of their impact on students and important school objectives, can create an atmosphere of excitement and enthusiasm.

To the extent that teachers work cooperatively and focus their self-improvement strategies toward a common goal, school improvement will be evident. Individually guided professional development can have a significant impact on school improvement if connected with important school goals and coordinated with others' self-improvement/development efforts as well as with other staff development strategies and structures.

Commentary

One of the issues involved in establishing individually guided professional development as a strategy for staff development is the determination of which teachers benefit most. For example, the approach may not be appropriate for first-year or inexperienced teachers who are expending much of their energy getting their classrooms set up and running smoothly. Self-assessment and improvement activities are valid to the extent that the teacher has an adequate grasp of the concepts involved in the area intended for improvement or development. It would not be appropriate if the teacher were attempting to develop skills or expertise in areas in which he or she had little background or understanding. However, it might be quite appropriate if, in such a situation, individually guided development activities were coupled with other coordinated professional development strategies and structures.

Another issue involves who supervises or oversees the individual teacher's professional development activities. When the person has authority over the teacher, then there is the potential for blurring the distinctions between teacher self-improvement and teacher evaluation. While both evaluation and self-improvement are intended to result in educational improvement, teacher evaluation is more formal, often imposed from the outside, and sometimes threatening. Performance objectives set as part of an evaluation system may tend to be fairly limited and easily achieved; the purpose of staff development, on the other hand, is to stretch the person, regardless of whether the goal is reached. Further, individually guided development efforts depend greatly on a teacher's sense of trust, openness, and willingness to take risks with new approaches based upon his or her own interests and needs. Depending on the approach taken in the school or district, evaluation may or may not be compatible with an individually guided development approach.

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5

Building a Foundation for Professional Development: A Case Study

What follows is a composite case study drawn from experience in a number of schools and districts. The description provides a framework for discussion of issues and problems associated with teacher development. By looking over the shoulders of these staff developers, we can see the triumphs and identify some of the pitfalls commonly encountered in schools or districts.

Staff Development in Jefferson School District

Staff development was not highly prized in Jefferson School District. Several years earlier a district inservice committee had been established, but their efforts to promote long-term professional growth activities were subverted by a superintendent who only "talked" collaboration. He directed the committee to plan a meaningful inservice program but limited the program delivery to three inservice days and a tiny budget. After a hopeful start, the committee lost interest in promoting single-shot workshops; they voted to dissolve the group and return inservice responsibilities to the administration. This experience left the entire staff distrustful of staff development in general and particularly distrustful of administrators who talked collaboration but controlled all the possibilities.

A combination of factors set the stage for significant change. First, a new superintendent was hired who believed in professional growth activities. Concurrently, statewide legislation was passed that required the establishment of local staff development programs. Third, a teaching team from one of the district's nine elementary schools participated in a state-sponsored regional school improvement project. The principal from this school returned from the project training enthusiastic about organizing building-based teams that could feed ideas into a districtwide staff development plan. She sold the administrative team on the concept of building-based teams as one way to connect the distinct needs of individual schools to district improvement plans. The principal's spark, the legislative incentive, and the superintendent's interest led this district to a new view of staff development.

On the suggestion of the principal, a consultant from the state's school improvement project was invited to speak with the Jefferson District administrative team about characteristics of effective staff development, activity options for professional development, and suggestions for how to set up a local program. After considerable discussion and some debate, the administrators decided to propose a three-tiered approach to staff development in which different needs at the individual, building, and district levels would be identified and accommodated. A new staff development planning group was formed, composed of interested administrators and selected teachers from each school. The superintendent scheduled a three-day retreat in July to help the group 1) develop a statement of goals and beliefs regarding staff development; 2) increase their own knowledge of staff development; and 3) design a structure and management plan for staff development in the district.

School board members were invited to attend, and one board member accepted. Out of the retreat came high spirit, common language and vision, and an initial structure for the district's staff development program. The structure proposed two levels: A district-level team would be responsible for supporting and coordinating professional growth strategies in all the schools; building-based teams would plan and manage professional growth opportunities for their staff. An overall goal for the first year would be to identify and respond to individual and building needs and develop norms of collegiality and professionalism throughout the district. The planning group, composed of representatives from each building as well as central office administrators, would become the first district team. Membership on building-based teams would be decided in the fall.

The superintendent presented an overview of the proposed staff development structure to the entire faculty at their first meeting in September. He strongly endorsed the plan and the value of becoming "a community of learners." His symbolic support was augmented by public commitment of money and time for professional growth activities. Use of four inservice days was essentially turned over to the staff. It wasn't enough time, but it was a concrete beginning, and there was an open invitation to explore alternatives to inservice days.

Building-based discussions about what staff development might look like and how it might affect the staff were then held in each school. These discussions were led by the principal and teacher members of the district team. Although many teachers were skeptical, given the past history of staff development in the district, they formally voted to adopt the proposed three-tiered approach. They were tired of homogenized districtwide workshops and responded particularly favorably to the concept of building-based professional growth activities. Many were also intrigued with alternative strategies that had been identified in their groups. They had not previously thought about staff development occurring in formats other than workshops on inservice days.

The four days allotted for staff development were dedicated to strengthening the professional growth teams and demonstrating some alternative routes to teacher development. The teams acquired skills in working as a team, assessing needs, and planning programs responsive to building-level interests. All but one building took advantage of the new staff development structure. Seven of the district's eleven schools formed professional growth leadership teams composed of teachers, the principal, and parents. Three others decided that their team would include the whole faculty. The faculty in the one reluctant school decided to wait and see what the others would do.

Each school took a decidedly different approach to professional development. The high school looked at broad school improvement issues; some elementary schools focused on professional growth goals of the staff; others simply started to work on good instructional programs that seemed to reflect their interests. Portraits of three representative schools follow.

Kingman Elementary

The Kingman School was the most traditional of the district's nine elementary schools. The faculty was stable, tenured, and experienced. They were historically resistant to innovations and considered most staff development offerings unnecessary frills. They were not interested in forming a planning group or wasting their time on general assessment of the school's needs; these activities would only take time away from their teaching. Working against this complacency was a changing student population that presented increasingly diverse needs. Tried and true techniques weren't working quite as well. The state department and a local university were offering a continuing education course on Joyce and Weil's Models of Teaching. This program, with its varied approaches to teaching and built-in peer coaching, was gaining acclaim among area teachers. A pilot group of six 'opinion leaders' at Kingman signed up for a week-long institute during a school vacation, with two two-day follow-up sessions occurring later in the year.

The course was rigorous and demanding, requiring new ways of thinking about teaching and new behaviors to use with students. Reading material presented a new language that was hard to understand. Peer review and analysis of practice came uncomfortably to this group and created a rather threatening environment for learning. The teachers were intimidated, but challenged and determined to succeed; they were, after all, veteran teachers, not easily shaken by inservice. As the effects of different teaching models on students became immediately apparent, their commitment grew. The program helped break the teachers out of their self-imposed isolation and touched their sense of professionalism. They couldn't stop talking about models, almost zealously so. The program created a common base for planning, observing, and talking about teaching. This professional talk broke new ground for staff development in the school. A core group of teachers had embraced a program and found a way to renew their teaching collaboratively.

Not only did the training institute recharge this group, but the follow-up support fueled their commitment to adapt these models to their classroom needs. They observed each others' classrooms, met monthly over potluck dinners to review videotapes and discuss refinement of their teaching models, and established a resource library of lesson plans and videotapes. Support also came through regional networking with teachers from other schools who were using the Models of Teaching approach. Two support sessions, organized by the university and state department and hosted by teachers from different schools, were held each year.

The initial participants refined their skills further the next year when they participated in a second round of training for other teachers in their school. During the training, they demonstrated various models and helped the trainers establish the local applicability of the program. This starter group was then ready to move into a training role itself, offering awareness sessions to teachers in other buildings. The one area where these demonstration teachers still lacked confidence was in coaching their colleagues. They felt awkward observing and commenting on their peers' performance. They wanted training in observation techniques and conferencing and asked for follow-up sessions for their own professional development.

The principal played a key support role throughout the program, arranging follow-up as needed, attending some training events, and making public statements about the value of trying new ideas—even if it meant departing from the curriculum. He learned enough about the Models of Teaching program to understand the language and give technical feedback as he visited classrooms. He played a pivotal role in organizing schedules and securing substitutes to enable teachers to observe one another. He also wrote a proposal for state innovative grant monies to expand the training to other teachers.

By the end of the second year, the staff was mobilized around the idea of using a range of models to teach to the varied learning styles of their students. Norms of collegiality and professionalism were clearly evident in the Kingman School. Doors opened, and visits between classrooms were frequent. The principal and teachers observed, talked, and planned teaching together. By this time, the staff recognized the value of continuous professional development and were concerned about maintaining the excitement that had been generated with Models of Teaching.

Some also wondered about other staff development programs but weren't sure where to begin. The Kingman faculty voted to form a planning group for ongoing professional development in their school and scheduled a summer work session with the district staff development committee to determine how to structure and manage their effort. The district committee helped the Kingman team develop a mission statement regarding professional development, determine school professional development goals, see links between their goals and the goals of other buildings in the district, and identify alternative strategies that might respond to staff interests and needs. This group was well on its way to providing a foundation for long-term staff development and integrating the efforts of a building with the general plans of the district.

For us, Kingman School is a good example of how a few committed teachers can initiate the use of two approaches to staff development—implementing an innovative practice (Models of Teaching) and peer coaching—and generate enthusiasm for professional development. Convinced by their experience that such carefully designed professional development experiences benefited them and their students, they were successful in spreading the opportunities and then, ultimately, formalizing a structure for continuing growth within the school.

Jackson Elementary
In contrast to most of the other schools, which had been uninvolved in professional growth activities, Jackson Elementary was in a classic state of innovation overload—in this case, an abundance of curriculum projects. Under the leadership of the school's energetic new principal, ten of its sixteen teachers had been trained the previous year in peer coaching, integrated language arts, and diagnostic-prescriptive arithmetic. The

training programs were well designed, research-based, and conducted over time with follow-up assistance. Trainers were top notch, and administrative support was clear. Still, the teachers were beginning to feel angry and worn out. The programs required significant changes in teaching patterns as well as the production of lots of new materials.

There was simply too much to do. Some of the teachers weren't sure the programs were necessary and resented not being involved in the decision to adopt them. They felt put upon and put down. The two oldest teachers threatened early retirement. With this climate, the staff decided to call a moratorium on new programs.

When the district staff development committee suggested developing building-based professional growth plans, the Jackson staff responded with mixed feelings. Some saw this as a call to implement more curriculum programs and were frustrated; others saw it as an opportunity to put a halt to the hectic pace of change the school had been experiencing.

A language arts team leader proposed that Jackson form a Teacher Assistance Team (TAT) to focus on problems associated with programs the school was currently implementing. The team would be composed of volunteers who felt the programs were worth salvaging and who were willing to assist other teachers struggling to manage the changes at hand. The idea of using problem-solving groups as a structure for staff development had been advocated by other districts in the region, and, for Jackson, such a strategy was a timely solution. The Jackson Teacher Assistance Team decided to interview all teachers to determine their concerns about and use of the new curricula, and then they proceeded to plan specific assistance strategies, including peer coaching by members of the TAT, small group feedback meetings, observations of the curricula in action in other classrooms, and a "make it and take it" file of lesson plans. The team felt it needed some training in peer coaching strategies and contracted with a consultant from the local university for training in observation and coaching skills.

Throughout the school year, the team provided assistance to teachers working on the new language arts and math programs. They even engaged some teachers in observations of their colleagues and shared what they had learned about peer coaching. By the end of the year, the TAT could generalize about common concerns associated with the math and language arts implementation and the need for continuing observation and coaching among peers. The TAT decided that they should offer summer training related to program implementation and training in peer observation and coaching. They did not have the funds to hire external consultants, so they braved the territory of being resource people in their own land. Their initial discomfort and fear that "the teachers will think I think I'm better than they are" wore off quickly with the staff's warm response to their training. The principal was pleased with the commitment of the TAT and supported the TAT's efforts by providing released time during the year for coaching and observation sessions.

As an added bonus, the TAT developed a mentoring program for the school's one new teacher. He needed more intense assistance in instructional strategies and classroom management, and the team was able to arrange both demonstrations and coaching for this teacher. A third year veteran, who still remembered her initial struggles in the classroom, volunteered to help the new teacher through his difficult first year. They met during lunch at least once a week to discuss classroom incidents and to debrief observations. By the end of first semester, the new staff member's confidence had risen, and he was sure he had entered the right profession.

An opportunity to support another professional development approach presented itself mid-year. Three teachers who were comfortable using the language arts and math curricula with mainstream students wondered whether these approaches really made a difference with special needs students. The TAT suggested they form an action research team to investigate the impact on these students and referred the teachers to a special education consultant at the university who could help them design a research study. The action research team met twice a month throughout the year, gathering and analyzing data, and eventually wrote an article based on their findings. The researchers gained insight into both the action research process and the impact of the curriculum programs on their special needs population. The knowledge gained was its own reward, and the teachers experienced a new kind of empowerment brought on by formal examination of their teaching. This new staff development experience made the teachers eager to research other topics and prompted them to encourage the rest of the staff to do the same.

By the end of the second year, innovation overload wasn't a problem in Jackson Elementary. Teachers were becoming comfortable with the new language arts and math curricula, and some were already refining the programs to meet the specific needs of their students. Decision making about staff development was clearly in the hands of the building team, and the staff felt well represented in its decisions. In looking toward the third year, the Teacher Assistance Team planned to solidify and deepen the staff's participation in the professional development strategies already underway. The team was sensitive to the need to give the innovations the necessary time to mature and become part of the fabric of the school. The last thing Jackson needed was another change overload. The TAT believed that the new professional development strategies and their team would soon be seen as a critical part of the school's operation, and the staff would be ready to consider new staff development goals and strategies.

Jackson is an excellent example of teachers' attempts to strengthen their own capacity to improve their teaching and their school. The TAT provided the programmatic structure to assess and meet needs. They were dedicated to enhancing the implementation of curriculum innovations that were already underway and used strategies such as peer coaching, mentoring beginning teachers, and teachers-as-researchers to help accomplish that work.

Northstar High School

Northstar High School was a rather dispirited place. Morale was poor, and communication among staff almost nonexistent. Perhaps because of these conditions, the faculty endorsed the concept of working on a building-based professional development plan. They had always resented district workshops scheduled with elementary teachers, feeling their needs were very different. This could be the opportunity to do something they considered relevant to their teaching situation. The school was suffering from a poor reputation both in the district and in the region, and a core group of teachers and administrators were willing to try to turn this image around.

They identified excellence as a theme for professional development in the school, wanting to stress to the staff and community that Northstar was committed to excellent teaching and learning. This group became the Excellence Team at Northstar. They were viewed as the major leadership group in the school, and their role was endorsed by the principal and superintendent. It was a strong team, composed of influential and action-oriented staff. At first they had some trouble functioning as a team (too many chiefs, no Indians), but with the help of an outside facilitator and some training in team building, they fairly quickly moved on to planning for staff development.

The team took a broad problem-solving approach to improvement in their school, feeling that it was necessary first to resolve major problems that were inhibiting improvement and growth. They spent much of the fall trying to understand their school, the students, and the faculty in order to determine what the focus for improvement should be. They also read research on effective schooling and teaching and used it as a framework for viewing their school. Articles were shared with the rest of the staff through a bimonthly staff development bulletin. Because morale was poor, they rejected use of formal written diagnostic tools. They knew what a survey on school climate would yield. Instead, they personalized the assessment process, with each team member interviewing and sharing ideas with eight designated staff members. Communication and staff morale improved considerably through this process.

The stage was set for identifying a priority problem, and the Excellence Team focused on inconsistent discipline practices as a general concern. With help from a school improvement consultant from the state department, they attacked the problem. The first step was to try to define the problem more clearly. They gathered data about student behavioral incidents, teacher responses to discipline problems, and school time involved in discipline problems. They then researched different approaches to school discipline.

As the team made progress understanding the problem and searching for solutions for Northstar, they periodically reported to the faculty. By early winter, the team was ready to offer a training program for the staff. To be successful, they felt the entire faculty must be involved. They presented an overview of the proposed model and were able to gain full staff participation in training. The care taken to involve the staff in assessment and program planning paid off; up-front commitment was not a problem. As a result of the training, the faculty gained one approach to discipline that they were all willing to try. They bonded together to test the model to see if it could make a difference in the climate at Northstar. This sense of common mission contributed greatly to the faculty's sense of efficacy; they discovered the strength of collaborating to work on a school problem while they increased their own skills in interacting with students.

The Excellence Team felt they had established a foundation for working with the staff but knew that the success of one discipline program would not accommodate all the questions about teaching in the school. The team was eager to deal more directly with instructional issues, but they recognized the need of many of the staff to be self-directing in their development. They decided the second year to offer a variety of professional growth opportunities that might respond to individuals' interests and concerns. They suggested individual growth plans, action research projects, and peer coaching as possible routes to staff development. Wherever possible, the Excellence Team encouraged collective work on topics of common interest. They knew that the more collegial the staff, the stronger the school would be.

With the help and coordination of the Excellence Team, the faculty found their interests were more common than not. Activities chosen included a coaching program; a seminar series on effective teaching strategies based on ASCD's videotape program *Staff Development for Higher Achievement;* a training-of-trainers program on high expectations for students; a breakfast discussion group; and two action research teams. Several teachers also participated in a regional special education teacher network and attended periodic support sessions. A portion of time in faculty meetings was spent discussing learnings gained from staff development experiences and implications for changes in practice. Just asking for teacher reflection on learning revitalized this old forum, the monthly faculty meeting. Eighty percent of the faculty were involved in some kind of professional growth pursuit. Although at times a bit scattered in their development, the staff were professionally stimulated and had increasingly more energy to stimulate students.

Northstar is a good example of staff development starting small with a specific, highly focused problem and using progress with that problem to lay the groundwork for a wider range of endeavors. The non-workshop orientation of subsequent activities is quite noteworthy: the Excellence Team could have assumed that they needed another charismatic workshop to rouse the staff once more. Instead, they capitalized on the general spirit of improvement in the school and used their instinctive knowledge of staff preferences for professional growth activities to offer well-timed options for individuals or small groups. The strategies of individually guided professional development, peer coaching, and teacher-as-researcher appealed to a staff that generally worked in isolation or within departments. In addition to these formal approaches to staff development, many informal interactions occurred. The staff spent more time talking about teaching and enjoyed the emerging sense of professionalism in the school.

A postscript to this building-based story involves the special education teachers on the staff. We mentioned that they participated in a regional network for special educators organized by the state department. The district staff development committee had brought news of the support network to all the buildings, and special education teachers throughout the district responded. The job of the special education teacher is a difficult and lonely one, and often leads to feelings of isolation and turnover. The ultimate intent of the network was to support these individuals through peer interactions and professional growth activities. Ten teachers from the district attended three support sessions held during the school year and a summer institute designed around their needs. The result of the network was renewed optimism, a feeling of self-worth, collegiality, and a reduced sense of isolation.

Conclusions: The District Perspective on Staff Development

Although the primacy of school-based concerns was recognized in the Jefferson District's professional development program, the importance of districtwide coordination and building a total educational community was not overlooked. The district staff development committee had met monthly to update the schools' progress and concerns, share information resources that might be of use, and discuss districtwide implications. They also planned and ran a spring retreat for all district staff development teams, coordinated professional development offerings (such as a special education network and Models of Teaching training), and conducted summer work sessions to refine overall program goals and help building teams plan for the next year.

The spring retreat offered recognition of staff development accomplishments throughout the district; help with problems; evaluation of progress; identification of common interests or needs; planning for major goals the next year; and an opportunity to celebrate and have fun. The retreat was planned and led by the district team and held in a comfortable old lodge on a nearby lake. The staff developers came away pleased with their own progress and impressed with what others were doing. They also left with a sense of direction for the next year and more of a collective spirit.

The district team turned its attention to refining its purpose and mission, clarifying the roles of groups involved in staff development in the district, establishing basic procedures for team operations, and selecting districtwide goals for professional development. Having recognized the individuality of schools during the initial phase of staff development, the team now wanted to promote interdependence and unity within the district. They planned cross-school professional development strategies such as a district-based action research team and role-alike meetings for staff. They also recognized that administrators had a right to staff development as well and planned to establish a principal assistance team and a peer coaching training program designed especially for administrators.

We can look back now at three years of professional development in Jefferson School District. Staff development is alive and growing. Differences between building interests and individual goals are acknowledged, yet a common sense of pride exists in this educational community. Interschool activities increase as the staff sees the need for sharing resources. Most school staff, administrators, and teachers are involved in professional development activities; even the community is encouraged to join in.

Even the recalcitrant elementary school slid quietly into action with staff members attending some of the district-sponsored activities. They then decided to do their own thing as well. They formed a research team to look at articles in major educational journals and distributed a staff newsletter highlighting promising instructional practices or materials.

Of course, the efforts in Jefferson would not have been successful without hard work, frustration, and blood, sweat, and tears. Threats to the staff development program arose daily. Yet the concerted effort to provide the right kind of structure and support—along with thoughtful program offerings—convinced teachers there could be more to staff development than isolated inservice workshops.

6

Evaluating Professional Development Programs

If Evaluation Is the Answer, What Are the Questions?

Most people agree that evaluation of professional development is necessary, yet there are few attempts to do more than measure 'happiness coefficients' at the completion of workshops. With more and more calls for accountability, and with far too few resources, staff developers are calling for approaches to evaluation that are practical, useful, and yet rigorous enough to be believed. Our intent in this chapter is to provide some ways of framing evaluation efforts and conducting them so that they are sound and helpful. We have addressed the chapter to nonevaluators, knowing that many staff developers must perform this function for themselves. And we believe that is perfectly possible, since good evaluations do not require a large amount of technical expertise—only the ability to ask good questions and know how to go about finding valid answers. Thus we start here—with questions.

There are many possible evaluation questions to be asked of professional development programs. Some might ask, "How is the program going? Is the program being implemented the way it is supposed to be? Do we need to make any changes in the program?" While others might ask, "Do we need more or different resources? Is the program making any difference? Is the program responsible or at least related to those differences?" And still others might ask, "Do the differences we see constitute an improvement?" An evaluation should attempt to answer some of these questions, some of the time.

This chapter considers some essential questions about the evaluation process for staff development programs, including:

- What outcomes should be evaluated?
- Who cares about the evaluation?
- Who are the audiences?

- What are the purposes for the evaluation?
- What major activities and decisions should be included in the evaluation process?
- Who should participate, and in what ways?
- How do we know what it all means?

Our assumption is that the purpose of evaluation is to aid decision making about the future of the program, i.e., its uses, changes, and resources needed at any given time. To make those decisions, we need information regarding program processes and program effects. We need to know how program activities are being implemented and received by participants. We need to know whether the program is making any difference and to understand the relationship between those differences and program activities. Perhaps most importantly, we need to know whether those affected by the program think that it's an improvement. Do they value and appreciate the changes?

There are always more questions to answer than time and resources allow. Thus, evaluation questions have to be prioritized to fit the interests of the audience(s) and resources available. The questions asked about a program can be narrowed and focused by the intended outcomes (i.e., expectations or advertised intentions) for the program.

What Professional Development Outcomes Do You Want to Evaluate?

A variety of goals and associated outcomes have been proposed as important and legitimate outcomes for professional development. They range from student outcomes to teacher outcomes to organizational outcomes, from changes in attitudes and beliefs to changes in skills and behaviors. Depending on the nature of the outcome, data collection and measurement strategies will vary.

Changes in participants

Changes in the participants are the most direct and immediate outcomes of a professional development program; thus they are the easiest to document, measure, and relate to program activities. Changes in participants might include changes in their knowledge base, their skill level and use, and their attitudes, opinions, and feelings. Methods of measurement or documentation will vary according to the specific changes sought by the professional development program. Some suggestions are offered below:

Changes in participants' knowledge base. Most professional development programs intend to increase the knowledge of participants. Pre- and post-testing would provide information on knowledge outcomes, as would self-reports through surveys and interviews.

Changes in participants' skill level and use. Acquiring new skills and using new practices are often key outcomes of staff development programs. Participants learn new teaching skills, techniques, or strategies that they then use with their students and/or each other. To document skill acquisition and use, Ellis (1982) suggests a self-assessment checklist, which asks teachers to indicate how well they thought they had learned the skills. Interviews, observations of teachers using the skills or practices, and clinical supervision or coaching discussion notes would also provide information on how well teachers had learned and were using the target skills.

Loucks and Melle (1982) suggest collecting information on the use of various components of the new practices teachers are implementing. They suggest that the Levels of Use dimension of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) can provide helpful techniques and strategies for measuring and evaluating what teachers do with their newly acquired knowledge and skill. CBAM evaluation information is collected through focused interviews or surveys which, when analyzed, can provide systematic, useful information for individual or groups of teachers.

Changes in attitudes, opinions, and feelings. In addition to the more observable outcomes discussed above, professional development programs may strive for more amorphous effects on the attitudes, opinions, and feelings of participants. Satisfaction with the activities themselves is the most frequently measured outcome of professional development programs. We are all familiar with traditional (and often pro forma) workshop evaluation forms. While useful, measurement of immediate satisfaction with a training event is not enough. There are many other long and short range changes in attitudes and feelings that are legitimate and beneficial outcomes of staff development programs. Some suggestions follow.

> *Raising staff interest and concern in a topic.* Evaluators may want to inquire as to whether staff are developing more favorable attitudes toward specific practices or perspectives embodied in the professional development program. One way to assess concerns is through another dimension of the CBAM, Stages of Concern (Loucks & Melle, 1982). Here, the specific concerns teachers have about applying their new skills in the classroom are the focus.

> *Building a sense of community and ownership of the program.* The program may contain specific strategies intended to build a sense of community among staff members and a sense of ownership of their school's professional development program. A number of informal, unobtrusive measures of progress toward that goal can be used, including: the speed with which staff fill out staff development forms, the number and quality of volunteers who assist the operation of the staff development program, and the frequency of informal conversations that involve sharing ideas rather than airing complaints (Ellis, 1982).
>
> *Increasing participants' sense of efficacy.* Evaluators may want to investigate whether the training program is resulting in an increased sense of confidence or efficacy with respect to specific ideas or, more generally, with respect to prospects for doing a good job. The program may intend to encourage a broadened and strengthened belief in the ability of children to learn and the ability of teachers to teach them as well as the related belief that good teachers are made, not born (Little, 1982).

To assess the above outcomes, evaluators might interview and survey participants about their perceptions of changes in attitudes and feelings. Document analysis and other unobtrusive measures, such as meeting minutes, observation, and documentation of the changing character of informal discussions among participants, evidence of increased idea and materials sharing, and unsolicited testimonials can also provide useful information for evaluation of attitude and feeling change.

Changes in organizational capacity
Sometimes professional development programs strive to make a difference in the overall capacity of the organization through increasing collaboration or expanding the roles of participants.

Increasing collaboration/collegiality. Evaluators may be looking for a demonstrated ability and willingness among participants to work collaboratively or collegially to improve classroom or school practices. This outcome is likely to involve improved willingness to examine, alter, or abandon old practices and test new ones; and to expose one's knowledge, skills, and experiences to the scrutiny of others. It surely would involve widened tolerance for the struggle required to improve practice (Little, 1982).

Expanding roles of participants. Little (1982) also suggests that expanded/altered role definitions or role relationships that improve the odds of classroom and school success are legitimate outcomes of professional development programs.

Assessment of changes in organizational climate are unlikely to be very quantifiable. Such changes can seldom be meaningfully reduced to numbers. However, qualitative impressions and perceptions of trends can be drawn from observations, surveys, and interviews, providing feedback on progress toward these goals.

Changes in students

When teachers are trained to do something new or different in the classroom, it is presumed to result in specific kinds of student outcomes. Decision-makers often want information on student progress related to the new practices and techniques teachers are learning. For instance, the success of social skills teacher training would likely depend, at least in part, on the degree and extent to which students demonstrated mastery of the targeted social skills.

A variety of measures may be appropriate to evaluate student outcomes, including formal and informal test scores, student products, surveys, observations, and interviews. While these outcome measures may be relatively easy to collect, it may be difficult to draw causal connections between professional development activities and student performance, especially if the student performance standards are not explicitly articulated within program activities. And, it takes time for significant student change to be readily observable as a result of staff development. The Rand studies on change estimate that it takes three to five years for the change to truly "take hold" (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978).

Figure 2 provides a summary depicting the range of staff development outcomes and appropriate measurement or documentation strategies for each.

So far, this discussion has focused on collecting information relative to intended outcomes, emphasizing the importance of seeking feedback on how well the program is achieving its original intentions. However, it is also important to consider unintended outcomes, both beneficial and detrimental. Evaluators need to ask questions that will at least provide information regarding unanticipated happenings and outcomes and attempt to reach some judgments as to whether those outcomes are desirable or not.

But how do you look for unintended outcomes? One way is to consider the list in Figure 2, asking if any of them might apply to the program under study, and seek information on them. Another way is to think about the various audiences surrounding and affected by the professional development program. Ask them directly what questions they would like answers to. In order to consciously seek out potential undesirable, unanticipated outcomes, ask yourself who might be threatened or discomforted by the program; anticipate and answer their questions. More often than not, however, the search for unanticipated outcomes results in discovery of program effects that are quite pleasing, sometimes even more valued than the original intentions. Such information can also suggest adjustments for the program, so as to intentionally include the especially beneficial outcomes that you have discovered.

Figure 2

Methods of Documentation and Measurement for Different Outcome Types

	Pre-post Measures	Survey	Observation	Interview	Document Analysis	Other Unobtrusive Measures[*]
Changes in participants' knowledge base	X	X				
Changes in participants' skill level & use		X	X	X	X	X
Changes in participants' opinions and feelings		X		X		X
Changes in organizational capacity		X	X	X		X
Changes in student performance	X	X	X	X	X	X

[*] Unobtrusive measures refer to observations of people, their environment, and their processes, carried out in an informal manner, in such a way that informants are not asked to respond in any special way for the purposes of the evaluation.

Who Cares? . . . Who Are the Audiences for the Evaluation?

The design, implementation, and reporting of an evaluation should be driven by the audience for the report(s). The utility of an evaluation will be directly related to whether it answers the questions of those who care—those who have a vested interest in the success or failure of the program. Patton's (1982) recent study of the factors influencing the utility of an evaluation identified the 'personal factor' as most important in explaining the impact or lack of impact of an evaluation. Individual people and their circumstances make a major difference in what happens. Patton argues that individuals bring leadership, interest, enthusiasm, determination, commitment, aggressiveness, and caring to program evaluation and its impact. Where personal factors emerge, evaluations have impact; when absent, so is impact. He concludes that evaluations make a difference where there is a decision-maker who knows what information she or he wants, an evaluator who is committed to answering decision-makers' questions, and a decision-maker who is committed to using that information.

Duke and Corno (1981) suggest that representatives of all role groups potentially affected by the staff development program should be involved in formulating the questions and interpreting the answers. Such involvement raises the following questions: Whose goals for the program will be evaluated? Who decides what the data mean? What decisions will be made using the data? Program staff might want to use the information to improve the program. State and federal officials might want to use the information to make global decisions. At the same time, teachers might want to use the information to help them understand the relationship between their new skills and their students' performance. The audience determines the issues to which the data will be related. They should determine what questions will be answered and whom the answers will be for.

What Are the Purposes for the Evaluation?

Evaluation theorists commonly refer to differences between formative and summative evaluation, as well as process and outcome evaluation. Some of the audiences of a program will be unaware or uninterested in these distinctions. They just want their questions answered. However, a careful analysis of their questions can help evaluators to identify a general purpose and direction, providing a helpful advance organizer for designing the evaluation process. The audience(s) may be interested in questions that address how the program is being implemented in order to make improvements or changes (*formative*), or they may be interested in questions that summarize the major activities and judge their adequacy (*summative*) in order to make more global decisions about the future of the program. Evaluation questions may focus on how the staff development activities were implemented and under what conditions (*process*) or they may be more interested in the results (*outcomes*). Within outcome evaluation, evaluators may want to document specific differences that have resulted, or they may go one step further and attempt to determine whether those differences resulted in improvement.

These different purposes are not necessarily exclusive of one another. A single evaluation might attempt all four purposes; however, that would be quite an ambitious undertaking requiring substantial time and resources. Evaluators might benefit by analyzing each of their evaluation questions to get a clearer picture of the major purposes for the evaluation. Being clear about evaluation purposes can help evaluators prioritize resources and emphases.

Formative/Summative

Do you want to improve the program or "decide" about the program? Formative evaluation questions aim at describing activities and events, increasing understanding in order to improve the program. They serve process decisions. Their purpose is to find out, "What do we do next? What have we learned about the program that gives us a direction for action?" Summative evaluation questions aim at 'summing up' program results. They serve global decisions. Their purpose is to find out, "Should the program continue to be funded? Should the program be expanded in scope or scaled down? Should we make any major changes?" or simply, "How have we done this year?"

Once again, audience interests, issues, and concerns help to determine whether the major evaluation purpose is formative or summative and the appropriate balance and target audience for each kind of question. Different audiences are interested in different things. School board members may not be very interested in which instructional strategies were most effective in achieving the most skills acquisition among participants, but certainly the program instructors will be interested.

Process/Outcome

Do you want to be sure the program is being implemented correctly or do you want to know what difference it is making? Process questions aim to determine whether the program is being implemented as planned or desired. They are directed at determining the extent to which the program has been realized (Cronbach, 1978). Their purpose is to find out, "What is our progress toward program implementation goals? What activities were carried out? Were they carried out according to plan? Were there unusual or remarkable circumstances or events that affected implementation of program activities? What were participants' reactions?"

Outcome questions aim at determining changes. They may result in information about both anticipated and unanticipated changes. Their purpose is to find out, "At what level/to what degree have we affected teachers for each specific outcome? Are teachers developing/changing the way we wanted them to?"

Evaluations should attempt to determine the relationship between what we are doing in the program (processes) and the changes observed in teachers (outcomes). Duke and Corno (1981) suggest that the two most important evaluation goals are to 1) determine the extent to which the program was implemented and 2) identify the factors that can maximize program implementation in the future. Yet, how can we be reasonably certain that the differences we have observed are due to our staff development program? Patton (1982) suggests that while we can't be certain about causality, we can get a reasonable estimation of the likelihood that particular activities had an effect. He argues that some systematic information is better than none. A rough idea of the relationship between process and outcome is better than relying entirely on hope and good intentions. Thus, process and outcome evaluation questions should be analyzed carefully in search of patterns and relationships between program activities and observed changes.

Patton also suggests that we discriminate between impact and improvement when looking at outcomes. He explains,

> Improvement involves a judgment about whether or not something is better. Impact involves the more limited question of whether or not something is different. An observed difference may or may not constitute improvement depending on who is making the value judgement about whether or not a change is for better or worse. . . Questions of right and wrong, better or worse, are not simple empirical questions. The empirical question is not improvement, but change. I suggest that we begin not with the question of whether or not teachers are 'better,' but whether or not they are different. Has the program been effective in changing teachers? Do they think differently? Can they do things now that they couldn't

> do before? Do they feel differently? Are different things occurring in teachers, in classrooms? These are empirical evaluation questions. Data from these evaluation questions can then be used to determine whether or not such changes and differences constitute progress or improvement. . . . Failure to make that distinction can lead to serious misunderstandings throughout the evaluation process (Patton, 1982, p. 12-13).

Thus, evaluation questions that focus on how things are *different* reflect an *impact* evaluation purpose. The purpose is to find out, "What have been the program's actual effects on teachers? Did we effect what we wanted to effect in teachers? How did we want them to be different? What changes did we get in their feelings, opinions, knowledge, skills and/or behavior? On the other hand, evaluation questions that focus on how things are better reflect an *improvement* evaluation purpose. The purpose is to find out, "Does the observed impact constitute improvement? What does it all mean?" The answers to these questions require value judgments and suggest that all affected audiences be consulted.

What Are Some Guidelines for the Evaluation Process?

Pay attention to the audience

Deciding whom the evaluation is for is the first and most important decision in mounting an evaluation. This decision affects all else that follows. Program and evaluation staff will likely have no difficulty generating a wide range of questions that they think are important and interesting; however, they are seldom the only audience for the evaluation. Earlier, we defined the audience of an evaluation as anyone who has a stake or interest in the program—and these are likely to differ. People who are responsible for global decisions such as funding, continuation, expansion, or retraction are likely to be most interested in summary statements about program impact and effects. They are likely to be less interested in the specific activities and processes of the program. On the other hand, teachers are likely to be most interested in the activities and immediate impact on themselves and their students. They are interested in stories, details, and nuances of differences in process and outcomes.

Thus, in order to be sure that each audience's issues and concerns are addressed, representatives of each major audience should actively participate in framing the evaluation questions. They should play as large a role as time, resources, and their other responsibilities will permit. Ask them, "What are your issues and concerns about the professional development program? What do you want to know more about? What decisions will the information serve?" Answers to such questions provide essential guidance in designing, carrying out, and reporting the evaluation results back to them.

We have all had experience with evaluations that become one more piece of paper gathering dust in the program archives. Investment of time and energy with the audience in the earliest stages of evaluation design increases the chances that the evaluation will make a difference, that it will be attended to, and that the reports will actually guide decision making.

Involve program staff and participants

While encouraging attention to the interests of other audiences, we recognize that staff and participants always have a significant interest in evaluation results. Even while making special efforts to respond to the concerns of administrators or funders, program people (e.g., the staff developers) and participants have a right and responsibility to play a significant role in all aspects of the evaluation. They are likely to possess the depth of information and understanding necessary to assure that results are accurate, meaningful, and useful.

Crosby (1982) suggests that the involvement of participants (targets of the professional development program) can contribute directly to the professional development goals themselves, as opposed to diverting resources from the goals. When staff and participants collaboratively plan and carry out the evaluation, the results are likely to be more accurate, insightful, and useful for program decision making.

She suggests that program participants can add to their learning from the process of evaluation as well as from the product. She suggests six areas for involvement, summarized below:

1. **Participating in clarifying the program's goals and indicators of program success.** Participants can assist evaluators in moving from vague goals to more specific goals and indicators of success. Such a clarification process enables program developers and participants to look back at planned activities to see whether or not they are actually working toward those specified indicators of success.

2. **Participating in designing the study.** Participants have an important role to play in determining resources (money, time, energy), the audience for the study, and the format for reporting. This process is likely to involve some negotiating and prioritizing of evaluation

questions, because most staff development programs have few resources allotted to evaluation. Most evaluation studies cannot afford to evaluate every part of the program or every objective, or answer every question of every audience. Determining priorities for information collection can be facilitated by involving participants while keeping the other audiences clearly in mind.

3. **Participating in developing methods of information collection.** Participants are often the most important sources of information regarding both program processes and outcomes. Involving them in the design of information collection methods is likely to result in more accurate information and avoid missing out on important information items. Participants might work with an evaluation specialist in designing instruments/strategies or at least provide input and feedback as information collection activities and tools are developed.

4. **Participating in collecting and supplying information.** Participants benefit from responding to interviews and other evaluation instruments. Being asked about what they do and have done is an important activity in itself. It causes them to pay attention to what has happened and stimulates additional thinking and discussion, which further contributes to their learning. Such reflections can result in greater awareness of their knowledge, practice, and feelings relative to program goals. Participants can also be trained in interviewing, observing, and document analysis, enabling them to contribute much needed person power to the evaluation team. Again, their level of awareness and reflection as a result of information collection activities should increase many fold.

5. **Participating by analyzing information.** Participants can play an essential role in clarifying the meaning of findings, especially surprising ones. They can explain the *why* or the *how come,* bringing a new perspective and deeper understanding of program results for themselves as well as the evaluators and other audiences.

6. **Participating in reporting learnings.** Participants can be both receivers and reporters. Participants can provide early feedback on drafts and sections of the report. Teachers reporting results of a staff development program at a school board meeting are likely to have more credibility than the program developers themselves. Again, their involvement and participation in reporting can increase their learning and reflection on the goals of the program.

When staff involve participants without defensiveness, they communicate a sense of openness and commitment to excellence that enhances achievement of program goals. Crosby (1982) emphasizes the role of participants in the evaluation, arguing that fewer resources will be diverted and that such involvement encourages reflection, increased awareness, and understanding of the program development goals.

Act at key decision points in the evaluation process
This section provides some step-by-step suggestions for designing, implementing, and reporting an evaluation.

1. **Agree on evaluation questions.** The design process begins with clearly defining the evaluation questions. Exactly what does the audience want to know about the professional development program? Now is the time to think about what outcomes you want to evaluate relative to program goals and what the purposes for the evaluation are. A caution: evaluators usually generate far more questions than time and resources can support. Evaluation planners must prioritize and trim from their initial list of questions. How to choose which questions to answer? Decision-makers must be consulted to find out what questions they care about. But even they may need some prodding and guidelines for choosing the most important questions. Cronbach (1978) suggests that evaluators invest more effort on questions about which relatively little is known and decision-makers care.

2. **Determine information needs and collection methods.** Once the questions are generated, clarified, prioritized, and agreed to, they have to be answered. Potential information sources and collection methods should be generated for each evaluation question. The more sources and methods used, the greater the likelihood that accurate and meaningful information will be collected. For example, questions asking about the results of an instructional training program on students might be informed by relevant formal and informal test scores and other student products. Interviews and observations of students and teachers using the program might provide a different slant on the effects and results. Consider using a work sheet like the one in Figure 3 for generating information sources for each evaluation question.

   This step is the essence of the evaluation design. Such planning worksheets might facilitate the planning process, especially if a team of evaluators is involved. A final note about this stage. Dare to

Figure 3

Examples of Entries on a Worksheet for Information Collection

Evaluation Question	Information Sources	Collection Method	Responsibility	Timeline
How do the training & follow-up affect participants' classroom behavior?	Teachers Supervisors Students	Observations using checklist Interviews	Teacher-as-researcher cadre	Oct - Nov (before training) April - May (after training)
Have this year's staff development offerings been relevant to teachers' needs? *What changes are desired for next year?*	Teachers	Written survey	Staff Development Coordinator	May
What is the impact of the creation of school-based staff development teams?	Teachers Principals District administrators & coordinators Community members	Ethnography	University graduate students supervised by district Evaluation Coordinator	Sept - Aug

search out the answers to hard questions. Designers and audiences should cultivate a stance of shared curiosity about their practices and their consequences, while applying a rule of 'no blame', if they want to gain the most accurate and useful information (Little, 1982). Respondents and staff need to be freed from threat or blame if evaluation information is to be specific and meaningful enough to serve program improvement.

3. **Collect and analyze information.** Evaluators should begin information collection according to agreed upon timelines for each evaluation question. They should begin collating, organizing, and analyzing the information as soon as possible. Analyzing as you go helps to assure that all evaluation questions are answered. It is not always possible to predict exactly what kinds of information will provide meaningful answers. Early checks allow evaluators to seek new information sources if the original plans don't provide the information expected and helps assure that the data make sense and relate to the evaluation questions. Early analysis helps to identify emerging issues, concerns, and questions not originally anticipated by evaluators. It provides enough lead time to identify, define, and collect additional information that explains and clarifies unanticipated outcomes.

4. **Report.** Reports should be tailored to audience interests and concerns. Both format and content may be different for different audiences because different audiences have different questions. Evaluators need not feel compelled to answer all questions for all audiences in one report. Funders and top-level administrators might want summative information that describes the impact and outcomes for groups of participants. Teachers might want more detailed portrayals of the process and outcomes as they relate to their students and colleagues. Audiences such as parents, community members, and school boards might appreciate pictures and products that tell stories about the staff development program, its challenges and successes. Reports that key into and stick to the interests of the specific audiences are more likely to raise the level of understanding and interest and, therefore, their support of the program.

5. **Loop back.** There are two forms of looping back within the evaluation process. The first refers to looping back at each stage of the evaluation process, while the second refers to returning to the beginning once an evaluation cycle has concluded with a report (or reports).

> Looping back at each stage of the process is recommended because each new evaluation activity may generate information that requires a revisiting of earlier decisions or activities. Defining information needs and collection methods may generate some new questions or the necessity to clarify the current set of questions. Early stages of information collection and analysis may raise new questions and new information needs, and so on.
>
> Evaluators should begin to consider their next cycle of evaluation as they are preparing their final evaluation reports. There are always some questions that cannot be pursued due to lack of time and resources and other questions that emerge during the evaluation process that need to be deferred. As understanding of current evaluation questions accumulates, new questions, information needs, and priorities will emerge. Looping back and reconsidering evaluation questions that fell off the priority list as well as ones that emerged during the current evaluation create a good starting place for a new cycle of evaluation.

Figure 4 is a schematic representation of the major decisions and activities of the evaluation process.

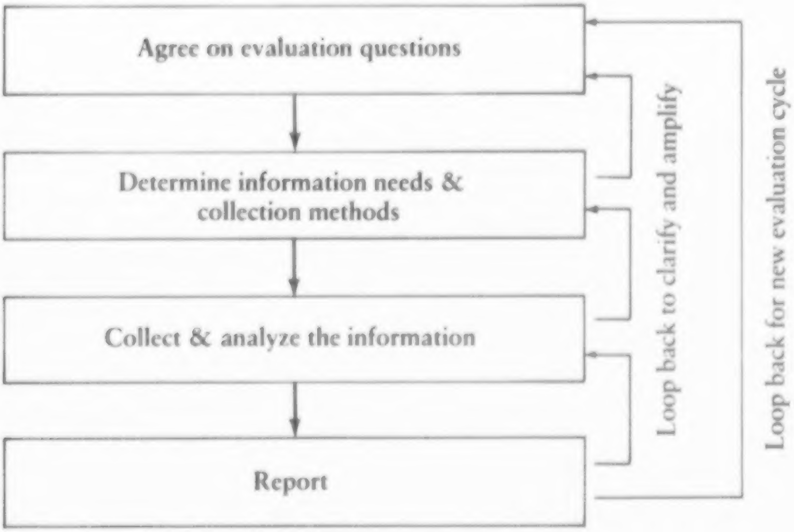
How Do We Know What It Means?

As soon as evaluators begin collating and analyzing their data, they must begin coping with the question, "What does it mean?" This question remains present through the reporting phase and into program decision-making processes. The questions of meaning relate to audience expectations for the program; their standards set the criteria against which the program will be judged. Should standards be set and agreed to before data collection, or should they be allowed to emerge as the data come in? Some believe that criteria should be determined in advance of data collection. Patton (1982) argues that prespecifying the criteria avoids disagreements about standards for interpreting the data once collected and permits discussion of what constitutes improvement without defensiveness, rationalization, and justification. He suggests that three major questions should be answered: What are the criteria for success or failure? At what level/to what degree do we expect to implement program processes and activities (or affect teachers for each specific outcome desired)? At what level are we doing an outstanding, adequate, or poor job? Both Patton (1982) and Little (1982) argue that specifying criteria helps evaluators to avoid collecting the wrong data. Little (1982) suggests that program outcomes and components/activities should be stated with sufficient specificity, concreteness, and precision to lend guidance to the formulation of evaluation criteria, the array of observable variables, and the selection of methods and measures.

Others (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Stake, 1986) argue that as the data are collected, new criteria and questions emerge that should be attended to, especially as one searches for unanticipated outcomes or tries to capture the nuances of processes and outcomes. They suggest a more formative strategy that begins with a careful identification of audiences. Then the determination of evaluation questions, information collection, and analysis proceed in a cyclical manner, frequently checking in with the audiences' issues and concerns. Audiences' beliefs about standards for success would then become one of the pieces of information sought by evaluators on an ongoing basis. This approach allows one to match evaluation priorities and practices to the most pressing and current program curiosities and demands. It ensures that one is evaluating something that matters to the audience.

Figure 4

A Schematic Representation of the Major Decisions & Activities of the Evaluation Process


Agree on evaluation questions
Determine information needs & collection methods
Collect & analyze the information
Report
Loop back to clarify and amplify
Loop back for new evaluation cycle

Perhaps the soundest strategy is to preplan as much as audience interest and commitment allow. Then leave some design and resource flexibility to investigate emerging questions or to propose different, more fitting criteria against which to judge program progress and achievements as data begin to come in and understanding grows.

Evaluations are frequently criticized as being uninteresting, untimely, and uninformative. If we want to perform evaluations that are useful for program improvement, we must be sure to answer the questions of those with decision-making power and interest—in other words, those who care.

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About the Authors

Susan Loucks-Horsley, Ph.D., a school improvement researcher and staff developer, has spent much of her career working to bridge the gap between research and practice. She is coauthor of *An Action Guide to School Improvement* and codeveloper of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), a framework for understanding and facilitating change in schools. Dr. Loucks-Horsley currently serves as Program Director of The Regional Laboratory and Director of Research, Development, and Evaluation of The NETWORK, Inc.

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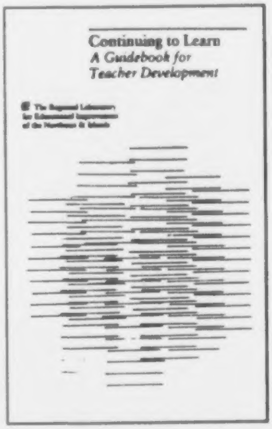

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